

# **The cost-effectiveness evaluation of minority language policies:**

## **Case studies on Wales, Ireland and the Basque Country**

**François Grin and François Vaillancourt**

**ECMI Monograph # 2  
November 1999**

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**European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)  
Flensburg, November 1999**

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**Deputy / Acting Director:** François Grin

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## **1. MINORITY LANGUAGE POLICIES IN POLICY ANALYSIS PERSPECTIVE**

### ***1.1 The issue***

This monograph is devoted to the measurement of the cost-effectiveness of various policies in favour of minority languages. It is intended as a primarily technical exploration into the set of instruments that can be used in (mostly public) policies addressing minority issues, and as an informational contribution to the public debate over such policies.

This research was initiated in 1997, when the authors were contracted by the Government of New Zealand to write an Analytical Survey on the general subject of language revitalisation policy. The New Zealand authorities were, of course, particularly interested in the possibilities to draw on a set of systematic policy instruments with a view to designing revitalisation policies in favour of the Maori language. The tender issued by Treasury in Wellington specifically required researchers to make reference to, and preferably base their work on some existing theoretical papers in the economics of language (for a recent overview, see e.g. Grin, 1999a), and to apply the framework developed there to an empirical evaluation of minority language policies. The underlying question running through this study, therefore, is the identification of what works, under what conditions, and at what price.

As we went about our task, it quickly became clear that we had to venture into largely uncharted territory. Although “language policy” and “language planning” (two terms between which no difference will be made here) are progressively emerging as full-fledged areas of specialisation (possibly reflecting the growing “differentiation” of language policies in various countries), much work remains to be done. Reference books in the field (e.g. Lapierre, 1988; Cooper, 1989; Fishman, 1991; Edwards, 1994; Calvet, 1996; Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997) offer an increasingly extensive and structured coverage of language policy and planning, and often point out the need for precise and targeted evaluation instruments; we observed, however, that such instruments are largely missing.

This is not to say that language policies are not evaluated, because they actually often are. What is at issue, however, is not an assessment of whether a given policy or set of policy measures does or does not result in a better position for a given minority language: this is often fairly well-known, but remains part of what one can be called “internal effectiveness evaluation”. In internal effectiveness evaluation, one remains within the confines of a specific policy measure. For example, one can (and often does) assess whether the introduction of minority language classes in elementary schools results in an increase in the share of minority-language speakers in a particular age group.

This, however, is insufficient to judge the policy by comparison with other policies: first, of course, other language policies with the similar aim of improving the position of a

given language *vis-à-vis* other languages used in society; second, other policies, which do not necessarily address language problems, but which nonetheless require some allocation of resources by society. Both types of comparisons are relevant to policy analysis, and assessing policies in this way requires us to engage in “external effectiveness evaluation”. In this context, it is not enough to establish the extent to which one particular set of measures has met the goals it was meant to achieve. Two additional requirements must be met.

- ✧ First, the goals have to be expressed in terms of a common unit of measurement. In the context of minority language revitalisation or promotion, this unit of measurement would normally be an indicator of minority language status, minority language use, etc., and the indicator chosen here is minority language use measured in time units.
- ✧ Second, evaluating the cost-effectiveness of a policy requires that the amount of resources invested in it are taken into account. If policies are to be compared with each other, then the resources invested in each have to be estimated, also using a common unit of measurement. Dividing the value of the output indicator (e.g., time units) by the value of the cost or expenditure indicator yields a set of comparable indicators of the cost-effectiveness of policies.

All this, of course, raises a number of epistemological, conceptual and methodological questions. In this monograph, the epistemological questions are deliberately set aside. The conceptual apparatus is also not presented in detail, and we confine our discussion of these aspects to a brief summary of the theoretical framework, presented in Section 1.3. Most of this monograph is devoted to the actual evaluation work, and methodological discussion only bears upon the assumptions which are necessary to arrive at our estimates.

To our knowledge, the estimates provided here are the first of their kind. As such, they can be said to have exploratory nature. As similar studies are carried out in other contexts (by ourselves or others), it is possible that new techniques will be used, initial assumptions replaced by more refined ones, etc. Nevertheless, it is our hope that this first foray into the actual measurement of the cost-effectiveness of language policies can be of service to a broad range of users, whether civil servants in charge of language promotion measures, NGOs concerned with the fate of minority languages, and of course scholars from various disciplines with an interest in minority issues. We also intend this study as a contribution to the broader question of the implementation of rights, whose cost implications are often neglected, despite the fact that the latter’s political importance is increasingly recognised (Holmes and Sunstein, 1999).

### ***1.2 On approaches to policy evaluation***

Policies can be analysed in a number of different ways. Without engaging in a taxonomic exercise, we can characterise them with respect to their main focus.

Some approaches stress the deconstruction of the explicit or implicit ideology underpinning a policy, and then move on to a description of some specific measures that

are defined (officially or not) as the embodiment of that policy. These approaches often display a distinctly hermeneutic orientation, in that they are chiefly concerned with “interpreting” a policy and revealing its actual goals and consequences.

Other approaches have a more narrowly evaluative orientation. They document the measured change in some sociolinguistic or demolinguistic variable (e.g., the percentage of speakers of a given language in a given age bracket of the resident population) and relate this change to a particular policy which is viewed as the main cause of this change (e.g., the introduction of this particular language as an optional subject in schools).

These two “genres” are often combined in the literature on language policy and planning, and most contributions cannot be assigned entirely to one or the other. In this study, however, we deliberately place ourselves in the more narrowly evaluative perspective, while also trying to push its inner logic further. Our emphasis is on the measurement of the effects of policies, the expression of these effects in terms of a common unit of measurement, and the linkage of the resulting indicator with information on the cost of each policies. This allows us to compare very different policies in terms of one common criterion, that is, cost-effectiveness.

To our knowledge, no such exercises had been carried out before. On the one hand, a number of estimations of the effect of policies are available (e.g., in the Basque case, where demo- and sociolinguistic evolutions are closely monitored in relation with the policy measures implemented in the Basque Country), which makes it possible to assess the internal effectiveness of policies; on the other hand, a few studies provide macro-level estimates of the costs of an overarching policy (e.g., Vaillancourt on the costs of Quebec language policy, 1996). However, the cost-effectiveness of policies, let alone their compared cost-effectiveness, has remained largely unexplored, and this study is intended as a step towards filling this gap.

This study accordingly emphasises issues of identification and measurement, although we endeavour to provide the background information that enables readers to view each policy in its social, political and historical context. The “deconstruction” of the policies, in particular the overt or covert politics that surround them, is not our concern here. This must not be interpreted as an oversight, since we do not deny the relevance of this type of exercise; quite simply, our focus is a different one, and we consider it useful to explore issues that are not only under-researched, but also of major importance in the political debate on the selection and design of language policies.

To this end, a distinction must first be made between *effectiveness* (which is concerned with the outcome achieved as a result of the use of a certain amount of resources—the “inputs”—or, symmetrically, with the amount of resources required to achieve a certain result) and *efficiency* (which is concerned with the choice of the *best* solution among a set of *effective* solutions). *Cost-effectiveness*, which is the focus of this study, combines information on “effectiveness” with information on expenditure for a given policy—in other words, with “inputs” measured in money terms. However, the efficiency of measures, as distinct from their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness, will not be discussed in this study. The reason for this is that the efficiency of a policy can only be

judged in relation with society's objectives, and the formulation of these objectives is a political process which is outside the scope of this study.

The policy costs taken into account here are restricted to direct and indirect financial costs (that is, direct money outlays plus "opportunity" costs). In other words, the "symbolic" or other non-material costs of policies are deliberately omitted. This should not be taken to imply that non-material (e.g. "symbolic") costs are not relevant; however, the focus of this study is on the more easily measurable types of resources or inputs, if only because any attempt to factor the non-financial resources into our estimations, apart from requiring data that are neither available nor replaceable by obvious "proxy" variables, would raise daunting conceptual problems. We believe that an evaluation of cost-effectiveness in this somewhat narrow (but usual) sense is relevant in itself, once it is understood that non-financial costs also could, in principle, be factored into the estimations. One additional reason for focusing on the financial side of policy costs is that, as pointed out above, it is a dimension that decision-makers are very sensitive to, and whose relevance is undisputed.

### ***1.3 The underlying theoretical framework***

Proper cost-effectiveness evaluation requires a frame of reference in which a given "output" (e.g., an increase in the frequency of minority-language use) can be related to a given "input" (that is, a policy measure, or set of measures, with a given cost) in a very rigorous fashion. In other words, it must rest on a model of the linkages between the latter and the former which meets demanding tests of internal consistency. To this end, we found it necessary to develop a formal algebraic model. This model will not be presented here, since the focus of this monograph is on the real-world policies. However, it is important to stress the role of this formal model as our analytical framework, and its main aspects are summarised in this section. The interested reader will find an extensive presentation in Chapters 2 and 3 of Grin and Vaillancourt (1998), as well as in the mathematical appendix of the same work.

The framework proposes a combination of issues that are, most of the time, addressed separately in the literature. It draws mainly on the *economic approach to language and language policy*, but is directly connected with more standard sociolinguistic perspectives. It is expressed in the form of an algebraic model to establish *causal relationships* between four levels, namely: (i) language policy and planning, (ii) the sociolinguistic context, (iii) a model of language use by bilinguals and (iv) aggregate language use outcomes, which are likely to have a subsequent feedback effect on the "policy" and "context" levels, which we will now consider in turn. The logical and causal structure of the model can be represented as a diagram (Fig. 1), where each box represents a variable or set of variables featured in the algebraic model. Briefly summarised, this structure is the following.

The families of policy interventions considered in the **first level** ("language policy and planning") include (i) provision of minority language goods and services; (ii) education planning (further divided into "skills development" and "acquisition planning"); and (iii) direct minority language promotion. Under fairly general assumptions, it is possible to provide logical proof, using the formal model, that various policy interventions will yield

desired language use outcomes. It is the political process of language policy (which we do not investigate in this study) that results in the adoption and implementation of a set of language policy measures. Of course, policies other than those considered here are possible, but this breakdown covers a wide span of the policies currently applied.

These policy measures, once implemented, have an effect on what we call the language status indicators, featured in the **second level** of the model. Analytically, they can be characterised as: (i) the overall supply-side factors of the linguistic environment (i.e., the extent to which the context in which people live supplies occasions to use the language); (ii) the overall or average competence level of minority-language speakers; (iii) the number of minority-language speakers; (iv) language attitudes. Arrows are used in Figure 1 to connect specific policy measures with specific language indicators, denoting the fact that the former affect the latter. More precisely, the first type of policy intervention (“provision of minority-language services”) positively affects the “supply-side factors of the linguistic environment”; a policy of “skills development” positively affects the (overall or average) competence level of speakers; “acquisition planning” (by which we mean a policy chiefly targeting the number of people who can use the language) positively affects the “number of speakers”; and “direct minority language promotion” positively affects “language attitudes”.

However, these language status indicators, favourable as they may become as a result of language policies, only *create better conditions* for minority language use; in and of themselves, they do not guarantee that minority language use will actually increase. What matters is whether these more favourable conditions actually induce people to use the minority language more, and this point is addressed at **level three**, which forms the core of our model. The third of the larger boxes in Fig. 1 therefore contains a model of language use. This *micro-economic model of language behaviour* focuses on bilinguals. Our emphasis on behaviour reflects the founding assumptions of economic theory, which can be defined as a science that studies human behaviour approached in a certain way, which we characterise below. Our emphasis on bilinguals reflects the fact that speakers of minority languages in the cases studied here are for the most part fully fluent in the majority language as well.

The economic approach to human behaviour—at least in the dominant, neo-classical tradition which makes up the overwhelming majority of research work in the discipline—assumes that social actors have certain “goals” (or, equivalently, “objectives”, “preferences”, or “tastes”), which define what they want to do; however, they are also subjected to a set of constraints. Some of these constraints are material, some are technical, and they restrict what people can do with the resources that they have. In this approach, human behaviour is seen as an explicitly or implicitly rational way to make the best possible use of these scarce resources (scarcity of resources being a constraint in itself) in order to achieve their goals.

Obviously, combining this type of analytical model with language policy issues requires us to define logical links between the “language status indicators” and the ingredients (goals and constraints) of the model of language use by bilinguals. In our model, language status indicators affect bilinguals’ language behaviour in three different ways, represented by arrows between the second and the third of the larger boxes in Fig. 1.

- ✧ First, language attitudes (which will presumably have become more favourable to the minority language as a result of direct minority language policy) will be reflected in people's goals (or objectives, or preferences, or tastes). In line with standard economic modelling, these goals or preferences are formally expressed by a "utility function". This effect is represented by the vertical arrow on the right between the small boxes "language attitudes" and "individual utility function".
- ✧ Second, the increased supply of situations where the minority language can be used, along with an improved overall level of competence by speakers, will lift or at least alleviate some of the language-related constraints. Formalising this relationship requires slightly more involved algebraic modelling, and this point is not further discussed here. Suffice it to say that this change in the set of constraints can be interpreted as a drop in the relative implicit cost of "doing things" in the minority language, such as shopping, watching films, reading stories to children, etc. In other words, it becomes easier or less expensive—in time and/or money—to carry out various activities in the minority language instead of doing them in the majority language. For example (A) the availability of minority-language media means that one gets more opportunities to watch television in the minority language; or (B) an increased average competence level of speakers means that it will generally be easier to find an interlocutor, in formal or informal situations, with whom can really use the minority language. All this clearly loosens the contextual constraints on minority language use. These effects are depicted by arrows leading to the small box "language-related constraints"; the vertical arrow on the left, from the small box "supply-side factors of linguistic environment", reflects effect (A), and the slanted arrow, from the small box "competence level of speakers", reflects effect (B).
- ✧ Third, the increase in the total number of minority-language speakers that a policy would have brought about will improve the overall context within which people operate and allocate their time between activities in the majority or in the minority language. This is why, in Fig. 1, the arrow below the small box for "number of speakers", instead of connecting it with a specific component of the language behaviour model, stops on the outer edge of the box containing this model.
- ✧ Finally, the model of language use by bilinguals also requires further elements (a time constraint, a financial constraint and what amounts to a "technological" constraint), but these need not detain us here (a detailed presentation is available in Grin and Vaillancourt, 1998). In short, using these additional elements, the model indicates how bilinguals will apportion their time between activities carried out in the majority or in the minority language, where activities are measured in time units.

The language behaviour model focuses on patterns of individual language use. However, our concern is with the societal use of the language, which we obtain by aggregation of the individual patterns. This aggregation is represented by the vertical arrow from "optimal individual practice of activities in majority and minority languages" and "aggregate practice of activities in majority and minority languages", found in the **fourth level** of the framework. The aggregation procedure is not treated formally in the model,

and in what follows we shall consider addition as an acceptable *approximation* of aggregation.

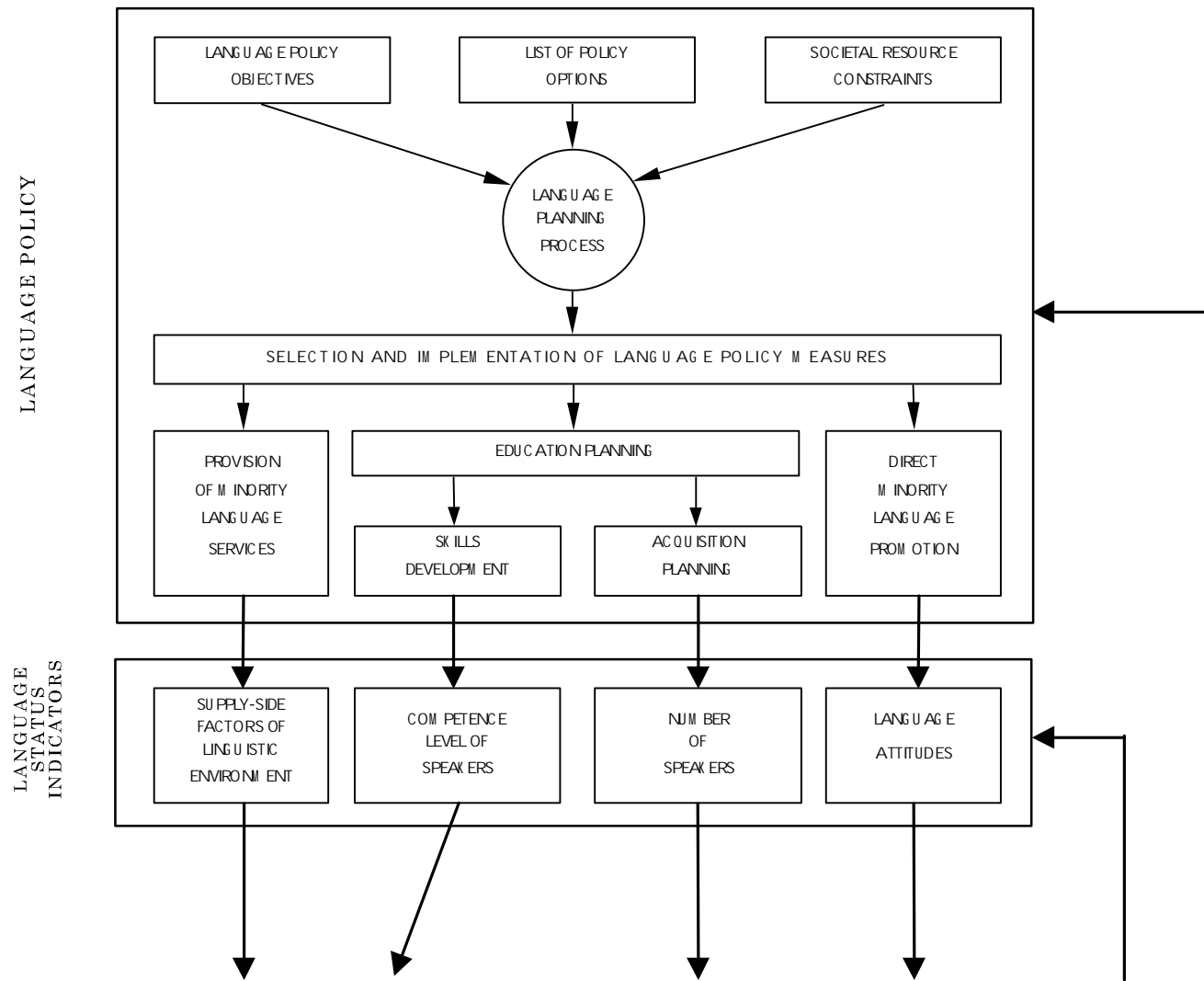
Because the chief use of a formal model is to ensure the *internal consistency of the cause-and-effect connections posited in the conceptual framework*, much of the model is devoted to ascertaining the formal (in this case, mathematical) conditions under which given policy measures (in level one at the top of Fig. 1) do indeed result in an increased individual and aggregate practice of a minority language (in level four at the bottom of Fig. 1). Our model identifies some of the important technical conditions for policy measures to be effective, which it is not necessary to discuss here. Its usefulness, in our opinion, is that it provides an integrative frame of reference as well as a way to parse the complex process of minority language policy, from the adoption of specific measures to their expected outcome in terms of increased minority language use.

However, this only serves as a backdrop for the present study. We will keep referring to its logical structure in the following chapters, which explains why we found it necessary to sketch it out here, but no further reference to its formalised aspects is necessary. In the rest of this study, we will be concerned with the link between policy measures, their estimated outcome in terms of minority language use, and the money invested (usually by governments) to effect positive changes in language use. In this application, we shall take shortcuts, in the sense that we will not actually run data through the formal model, if only because such data are not available.

Nevertheless, apart from a logically coherent *representation* of the relationships between the numerous elements involved, the model generates a set of logically buttressed *interpretations* for our findings, including in terms of their implications for policy.

This study contains an evaluation of some policies adopted in favour of three western European languages, namely Welsh, Basque and Irish. The outcomes of these policies, in line with the formal model, will be evaluated in time units, where the amount of time spent doing things in the minority language (instead of the majority language) is a convenient unit of measurement that will enable us to compare the effectiveness of different policies, if only because all of the policies considered aim at an increase in the share of their time that people spend doing things in the minority language.

FIGURE 1 : CAUSAL STRUCTURE OF THE MODEL





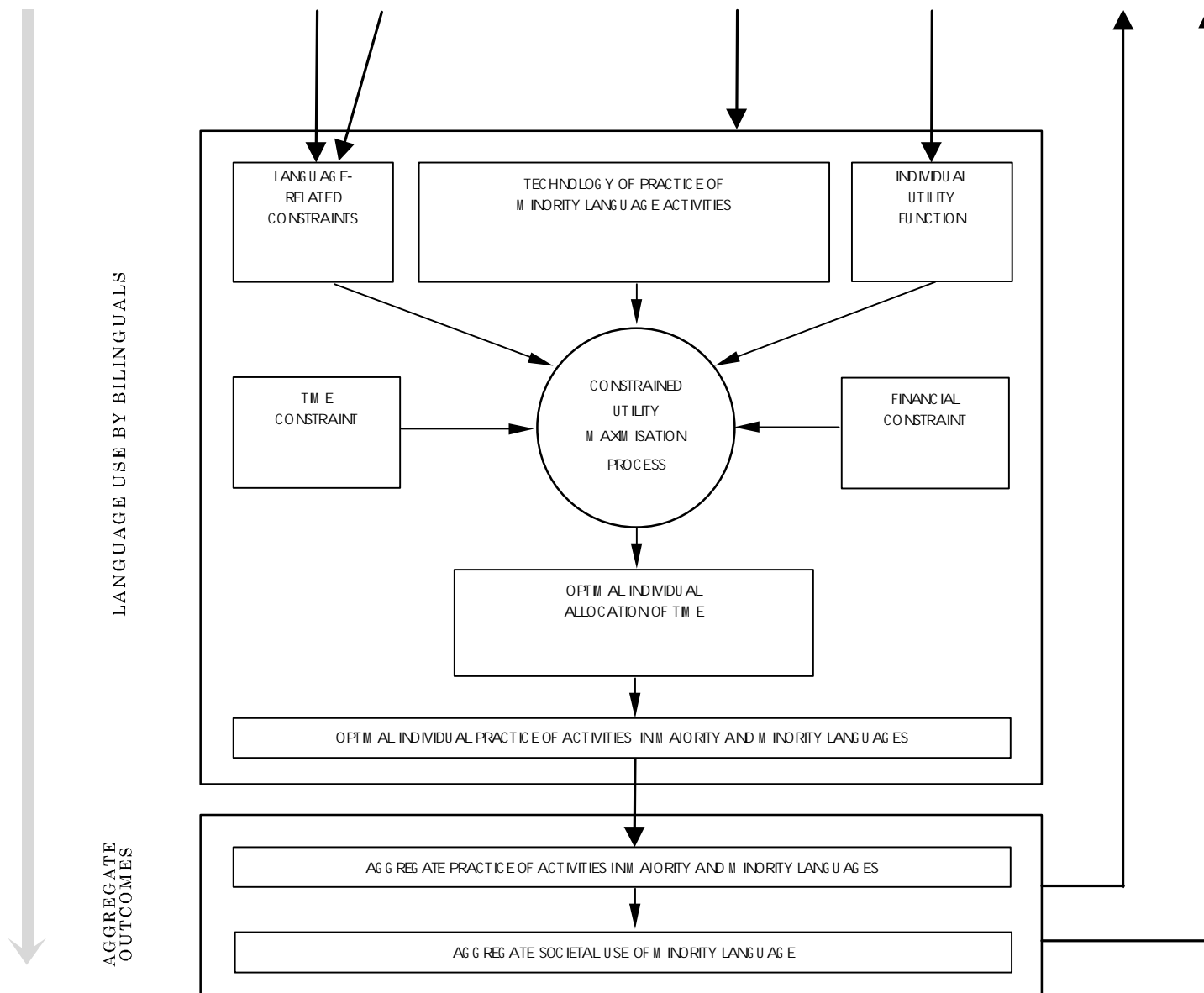
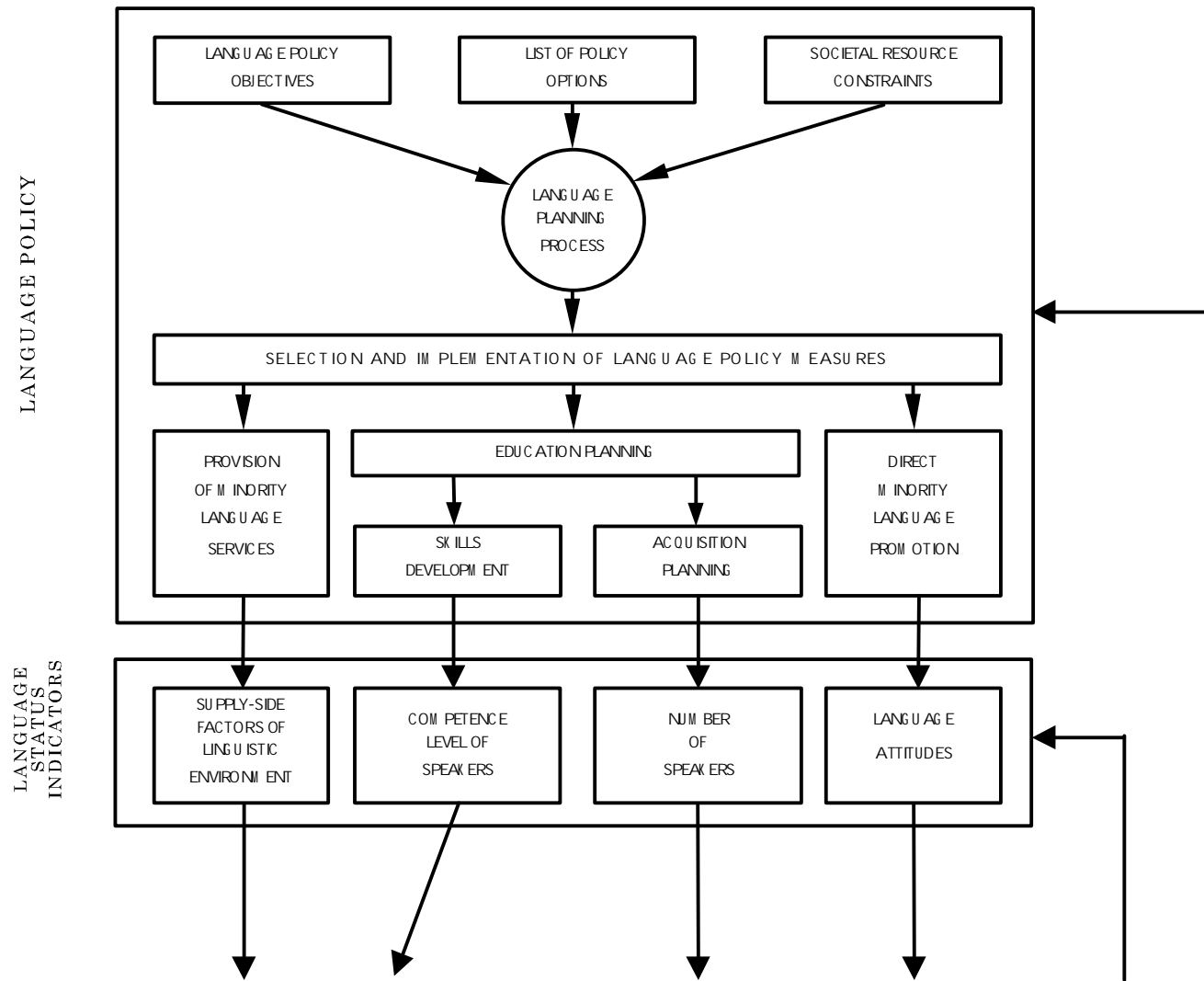
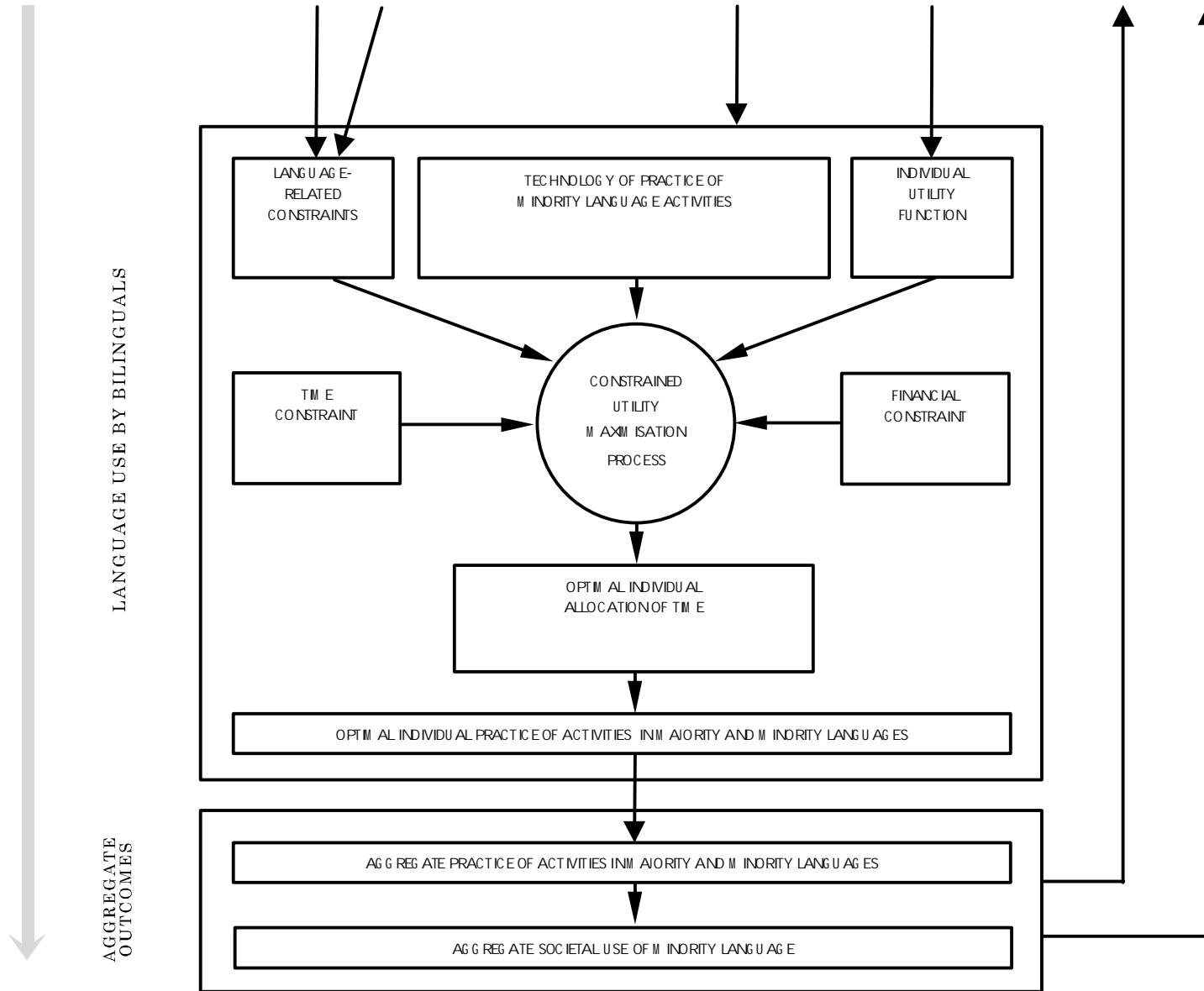


FIGURE 1 : CAUSAL STRUCTURE OF THE MODEL





### ***1.4 The limitations of this study***

Because it focuses on four policy cases (two in Wales, one in Euskadi, one in the City of Galway), this study cannot be seen (nor is it intended) as a general treatment of the cost-effectiveness of minority language policies. While it would have been interesting to investigate other measures adopted in other contexts, many are ruled out from the outset. More precisely, the obstacles are the following.

- ✧ First, as noted above, the measurement of policy effectiveness remains an underdeveloped side of the study of language policies, and we are not aware of any other comparative work in this area. A considerable amount of literature certainly exists, particularly in the case of minority language education, offering for example detailed analyses of the organisation and performance of minority language education schemes. However, such exercises are mostly confined to issues of “internal effectiveness”, and fall short of actual policy analysis, which requires an “external effectiveness” perspective (see Section 1.1). It is the external effectiveness perspective that addresses the question of why any resources at all should be devoted to a particular set of policies rather than to another set of policies, and which studies the effects of these policies outside the particular sphere (such as the education system) where they are implemented. In the absence of a firmly established body of research, this study necessarily has an exploratory nature, and should not be seen as a definitive treatment of the question.
- ✧ Second, hard data are very few, and even language planning bodies with high-level expertise and a solid experience in research, implementation and evaluation, such as Euskadi’s Deputy Ministry for Language Policy (*Hizkuntza Politikarako Sailordetza*), do not necessarily have or publish quantitative data that could lend themselves to a full-fledged investigation of the effectiveness of their policies. We have found no example of an evaluation connecting a particular policy on the one hand, and an indicator of the amount of time during which bilinguals use their minority language, let alone its unit cost, on the other hand. Much of the readily available information is of a qualitative nature, and may offer quantitative evidence of a circumstantial nature<sup>1</sup>. Generally, the task is a difficult one. Even in the case of Quebec, which is probably the one most extensively studied by economists, it has been impossible to demonstrate an indisputable link between language policies and the use of French in the workplace, whose main statistical determinants are the ownership of firms and the markets served in or outside of Quebec. Indeed, it is only in the case of the language of schooling that one can clearly show the impact of language policies, with the share of immigrant children attending French school

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<sup>1</sup> With respect to the problem of the adequacy of data in minority language research, it is useful to quote the *Euromosaic* report: “Language surveys are not new in the study of minority language groups, and some of them are of a very high quality. However, it is surprising how few of them have been constructed by reference to the rigour of an explicit theoretical perspective as is customary in survey research. Rather, they have often consisted of little more than a check list of language use contexts sprinkled with questions concerning attitudes which are not theoretically contextualised. In this respect the investigators appear either to be working intuitively, or to be deploying some form of inductive method.” (Nelde, Strubell and Williams, 1996).

increasing from 25% to 75% in the 1970-1995 period as the access to English language schools—with the exception of private establishments—was made illegal.

- ✧ Third, even if the perfect data set were available, caution would be required when using it in a statistical evaluation of policy effectiveness, because little is known about the exact cause-and-effect relationships between specific policy interventions and language use outcomes. When such relationships are discussed in the sociolinguistic literature, it is often the case that little attention is paid to the logical conditions under which desired outcomes can be expected, or actually obtain; as a consequence, no systematic empirical testing of policy models is possible, precisely because of the absence of models in testable form. The formal model underpinning this research is intended as a step in the right direction, at least for our present purposes. However, we insist that its main function is to offer a point of reference, in that it can help think about the links between policy and outcomes, but that it is not to be taken as an exact representation of real-world links.
- ✧ Fourth, not all types of quantitative information would lend themselves to a quantitative analysis of efficiency. Suppose that for some 50 minority language policy contexts, we had reliable and comparable data the following variables: the percentage of speakers  $M$ , the percentage  $T$  of their time that they spend on minority-language activities, the number  $D$  of domains in which the language can be used, and an indicator  $R$  of the relative attractiveness of minority-language and majority-language activities; suppose in addition that information were available about per capita spending  $S$  on language policy, broken down by type of measure, for  $N$  different types of intervention. Even in such an ideal situation, 50 observations would be too low a number to allow anything but the most basic statistical treatment; in particular, this would rule out any econometric estimation of the relative effectiveness (in terms of language use) of the various policy interventions (as opposed, presumably, to “laissez-faire”). What would be required is individual data, making it possible to link (using ordinary least squares) individual patterns of language use on a variety of independent variables, including individual control variables, macro-level sociolinguistic context and policy indicators.
- ✧ Fifth, even extensive individual cross-sectional data, as described in the preceding paragraph, would only provide indirect evidence on the relative effectiveness of particular policies, because the exercise would rely on a comparison of patterns of language use in different communities, each of them characterised by the set of policies in force where they live. A preferable option would be to have individual panel data covering subsequent years, in the same way as censuses taken on a regular basis.

In short, there is no obvious or easy approach to an effectiveness evaluation exercise. Collecting the necessary data, or extensively piecing together heterogeneous data scattered in a plethora of literature would have been impracticable. As a result, we have had to make the following two methodological choices.

First, we have had to replace actual data on language use (or, more specifically, on increased language use as a result of a particular policy) by estimates of the latter. These

estimates are admittedly rough. However, we consider them to be better than no estimates at all. Moreover, our main point is not to establish the absolute, but the relative cost-effectiveness of different policies, in order to provide a ranking of cost-effectiveness. This ranking, as shown in the last chapter of this study, remains unaffected even when very different assumptions are made about the costs or the effects of policies, thereby confirming the indicative value of the instrument.

Second, we have restricted our attention to some cases where some reliable information exists, from which our estimates of costs and effects could be derived. In other words, our strategy has been not to maximise the number of cases about which unprocessed and/or insufficient information could be retrieved, but to focus on a limited number of cases where more reliable information could be integrated in the framework.

Another important criterion in our selection of cases has been the apparent success of the policies pursued. One of the main objectives of this study is to show what can be done to revitalise a minority language. The policy interventions chosen here provide examples, and we have attempted to ascertain the conditions that have made these policies successful. Obviously, a symmetrical strategy could have been adopted, that is, we could have studied examples not of success but of failure, in order to find out the reasons for such unhappy outcomes, and to identify pitfalls rather than assets in revitalisation processes. However, information about the reasons for the failure of some policies is likely to be even more difficult to obtain; besides, our goal is first and foremost to see what is possible, not what appears to be impossible.

### **1.5 Data sources**

As a general rule, the data that would have been necessary for a statistically sophisticated assessment of the effectiveness of different language policy measures simply do not exist. This study therefore makes use of secondary sources, most of them books, papers and reports, including a large number of such documents issued by language planning bodies.

The agencies and official bodies whose materials were used in this study are:

- ◇ The European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, Dublin & Brussels;
- ◇ Office des publications officielles des Communautés Européennes, Luxembourg;
- ◇ The Council of Europe, Strasbourg;
- ◇ Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg / Welsh Language Office, Cardiff;
- ◇ The Welsh Office / Y Swyddfa Gymreig, Cardiff;
- ◇ The Mercator Media Project, Aberystwyth;
- ◇ Menter a Busnes, Aberystwyth;
- ◇ The Mercator Education Project, Ljouwert / Leeuwarden;
- ◇ Bord na Gaeilge / Irish Language Board, Dublin;
- ◇ Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge, Dublin;
- ◇ An tÚdarás na Gaeltachta / Gaeltacht Authority, Na Forbacha;
- ◇ Hizkuntza Politikarako Sailordetza / Deputy Ministry for Language Policy, Vitoria / Gasteiz;

- ✧ Hezkuntza, Unibersitate eta Ikerketa Saila / Department of Education, Universities and Research, Vitoria/Gasteiz;
- ✧ Direcció General de Política Lingüística, Barcelona.

Some of these agencies, such as the Welsh Language Office, also publish documents drawn up by other bodies, such as progress reports from different Welsh counties on the development and implementation of language planning schemes that fall within their purview.

### *1.6 Structure of the case studies*

Each of the following case studies comprises the following eight steps.

They start out in **step one** with some basic information about the case considered, in order to provide the essential demolinguistic, geolinguistic and historical background. We wish to stress that these brief introductory elements are in no way intended as a full-fledged account, sociolinguistic or otherwise, of these language contexts; they should, however, provide the general reader with a few essential facts and dates.

In **step two**, we briefly position the policy to be studied with respect to the analytical framework whose main points were briefly sketched out above and represented in Fig. 1.

In **step three**, the case studies move on to a brief account of the emergence of the policies considered, with key dates on the initiation of the policy and the implementation of its major steps, including possible reorientations.

In **step four**, we identify the agency (or agencies) responsible for the selection, design and implementation of the policy. These agencies are usually part of governmental political and administrative structures, but as regards the delivery of the products that are instrumental in the implementation of some policies (for example, the production of television programmes), private companies also have an important role to play. The participation of the private sector can also be an important one in direct promotion policies, which seek to persuade users (including businesses) to use the minority language more often.

**Step five** focuses on a description of the actual policy measures and their implementation, where public and private sector agents sometimes both intervene.

**Step six** presents information about total expenditure on the policy considered. For each of them, we also compute an estimate of unit cost per person-hour of language use. To our knowledge, this type of information is nowhere provided in the language planning literature. These estimates must be understood as orders of magnitude, and their chief usefulness is to provide a common unit of measurement to assess the respective cost-effectiveness of different policies, in terms of the latter's ultimate target, that is, minority language use.

In **step seven**, we discuss the outcomes of each policy, in terms of indicators such as the prevalence of bilingual signs or the percentage of school-age children enrolled in schools

where the minority language plays an important or even a dominant role, the ratings of minority-language TV programmes, or indicators of the public's attitudes towards the use and/or visibility of the language. Of course, as pointed out in the preceding chapter, limited knowledge of the exact cause-and-effect relationships between policies and outcomes and lack of precise or relevant data makes it risky to interpret patterns of language use, or changes in the latter over time, as the direct outcomes of policy measures; rather, the interpretation is that observed patterns are likely to have been aided by policy measures.

In **step eight**, we propose an overall judgement of the policy in question, focusing on the conditions that appear to have made it a more or less successful one.

This study is organised as follows. In Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to the Welsh experience in bilingual signs and television broadcasting respectively. Chapter 4 presents the Basque experience in minority language education, and Chapter 5 is devoted to the Irish case. Chapter 6 examines the conditions that have made these policies effective. Chapter 7 provides a brief summary and conclusion.



## **2. LANGUAGE VISIBILITY: ROAD AND TRAFFIC SIGNS IN WALES**

### ***2.1 Background on the Welsh language<sup>2</sup>***

Welsh (*Cymraeg*) is a Celtic language of the Brythonic branch, closely related to Breton (*Brezhoneg*), and more distantly to the Celtic languages from the Goidelic branch, that is, Irish (*Gaeilge*) and Scottish Gaelic (*Gàidhlig*). The Celtic languages, which form a branch of the vast Indo-European family, include the now extinct Cornish and Manx, which are currently the object of revival efforts (Walter, 1994), were the dominant languages of Western Europe from the 5th century B.C. to the 5th century A.D. approximately (Katzner, 1975). Speakers themselves often disagree about the extent to which, with some effort, Welsh and Breton are mutually understandable, but Welsh is not readily understandable from English, the locally dominant language.

The Acts of Union passed in 1535 and 1542 incorporated Wales into England, made English the only language of the courts in Wales, and banned all use of Welsh from public office. The local elite progressively shifted to English, and any association with the Welsh language came to be regarded as a social and economic hindrance. It is no surprise that under such circumstances, the position of Welsh relative to English declined steadily. English became the sole language of schools and any use of Welsh was actively discouraged by teachers and parents themselves; county councils were forbidden to keep minutes in Welsh. The social and economic changes brought on by the industrial revolution, the development of mining and industry in the southern valleys and in the North East attracted Welsh speakers from more remote areas as well as English-speaking immigrants, but English was unavoidably the language of communication, putting the entire burden of language adaptation on the Welsh themselves.

The first population census in Wales was taken in 1801, but although some language information was collected in small-scale surveys in the second half of the 19th century, it was not until 1891 that a language question was included in an official census. Comparability between successive census questions is not perfect (Pryce and Williams, 1988), but the decennial censuses taken since then (except in 1941, when it did not take place) report a pattern of continuing attrition of Welsh, with the decline of the language spreading westwards from the border area, and outwards from Pembrokeshire, where English immigrants had settled at an early stage. This decline was particularly manifest in relative terms, that is, on the basis of the percentage of the resident population able to speak Welsh; up until the turn of the 20th century, the absolute number of speakers increased to 977,000 in 1911, but decreased sharply in the 1911-1981 period. This decrease reflects massive outmigration, including from the Welsh strongholds of Dyfed and Gwynedd, in the wake of the Great Depression.

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<sup>2</sup> The information in this section is in large part based on the survey by Elis-Thomas (1997) and on the Welsh Language Board's Strategy for the Welsh Language (*Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg*, 1995).

The survival of Welsh to the present day despite these hostile circumstances has been credited in large part to the use of the language in religious practices, which was relayed by a broader cultural struggle, including Welsh debating societies, literary production, and the eisteddfodau, the yearly culture and music festivals revived in the 19th century. Some timid policy measures alleviating the pressure on Welsh were taken in the middle of the 20th century; use of the language in the courts was allowed in 1942; Welsh-medium education was authorised in 1944; the BBC started a Welsh service in 1937 and introduced some Welsh-language radio programming.

The first major positive change in the legal status of Welsh took place with the passing of the Welsh Language Act in 1967, but the improvements it offered were still rather modest, being essentially confined to making the use of Welsh in the courts a legal right. In 1988, however, the Welsh Language Board (*Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg*) was established in order to provide advice on language matters to the British Secretary of State for Wales. Apart from undertaking a variety of promotional measures in favour of Welsh, notably a system of grants used to promote the language, the Board issued a series of Recommendations for a New Welsh Language Act (*Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg*, 1991). A New Act was passed and came into force in December 1993.

The 1993 Welsh Language Act provides that Welsh and English are to be treated equally in the conduct of public business, confirms the establishment of the Language Board as a statutory body, but stopped short of policy measures taken in other cases, such as Quebec's 1977 Charter of the French Language, which remains to this day, despite recent simplifications, one of the most extensive examples of legislation on language status. The Act is less extensive than the draft bill submitted by the Board, and, for example, employers are not allowed to specify positions as requiring the ability to speak Welsh.

Nevertheless, the 1993 Act reflects positive changes of considerable import for the position of Welsh. Welsh is now part of the National Curriculum for every child in Wales, and some secondary education streams do not require students to demonstrate competence in English. In 1991/92, 26.1% of primary schools in Wales were defined as "Welsh-speaking schools", and a further 7.2% used Welsh as a medium for part of the curriculum. At the secondary level, 15.9% of the school-going population attended schools that taught anywhere from 5 to 16 subjects through the medium of Welsh. However, at the end of the same cycle, only 4.5% of students passed their General certificates in Welsh (Packer and Campbell, n.d.). County and local authorities have set up Welsh language schemes in order to be able to serve the public in Welsh. Private initiatives encourage the use of Welsh in business and commerce. Welsh television (*Sianel Pedwar Cymru*, usually simply known as S4C) has been described as a "classic example of what can be achieved" for a minority language in the media sphere.

According to the 1991 Census, 508,098 (18.7%) of the Welsh population (aged 3 years or older) declared to be able to speak Welsh. Although this represents a small drop in the absolute number of speakers since the 1981 Census, the percentage of speakers in the younger cohorts has markedly increased, as shown by Table 1 below:

TABLE 1  
PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE ABLE TO SPEAK WELSH, YOUNGER COHORTS  
FIGURES IN THOUSANDS, PERCENTAGES IN PARENTHESES

AGE GROUP	CENSUS YEAR		
	1971	1981	1991
5-9	32.6 (14.5)	33.6 (17.8)	44.6 (24.7)
10-14	35.2 (17.0)	41.9 (18.5)	47.1 (26.9)

Source: *Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg*, 1995.

Attitudinal figures are encouraging too, as evidenced by the results of a 1995 opinion poll that reported that 88% of the population felt pride in the Welsh language, 83% considered that public bodies should be able to operate bilingually, and 68% of non-Welsh speakers agreed with the goal to “enable the language to become self-sustaining and secure as a medium of communication in Wales”.

Despite these positive figures, there is also cause for concern, since the prevalence of Welsh in its traditional strongholds of Gwynedd and Ceredigion/Cardiganshire<sup>3</sup> is waning, and Welsh remains associated with traditional contexts much more than English does<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.2 Bilingual signs as language policy

Bilingual signs belong to a broader area of intervention, which could be called the “visibility of the language”. The relevance of language visibility as an analytical category in language policy is well established, and constitutes one of the keystones of well-known language planning cases, such as Quebec’s Charter of the French Language.

Language visibility can be enhanced by all manners of public signs put up by the authorities or agencies acting on their behalf, notably road and traffic signs, street names, designation of official buildings, information, and safety recommendations for government services visible in the public domain. Generally, language visibility takes the form of *bilingual* signs, although some language legislation, such as Quebec’s, specifically exclude languages other than the official language (in this case, French) from certain public signs.

Bilingual road or traffic signs generally fall into three categories, namely (i) regulatory, (ii) warning and (iii) informatory signs. They are but one expression of language visibility in the official sphere, and the latter represents one form among many of the provision of minority-language services. However, it is worth examining for three reasons: first, it can be a powerful tool of language relegitimisation; second, it is a

<sup>3</sup> Ceredigion (Cardiganshire) is the most Welsh-speaking part of the former County of Dyfed; county boundaries were redrawn in 1996.

<sup>4</sup> There is a clear geolinguistic pattern in Wales, with some areas (roughly, the eastern slice of Wales along the English border, including densely populated Gwent/Monmouthshire, the Glamorgan region around Cardiff, and Pembroke), are deeply anglicised, while Gwynedd, Ceredigion, small pockets of Powys, and the hinterland of Caerfyrddin/Carmarthen have higher percentages of Welsh-speakers.

conceptually and technically simple measure; third, it is relatively inexpensive, if bilingualisation of signs takes place as normal wear and tear require it. Of course, its effect on language use is indirect, but in an evolutive approach to language policy, it helps prepare the ground for additional measures taken at a later stage.

The provision of such services in the minority language will have a positive effect on the *supply-side factors of the linguistic environment* (see Fig. 1). This, in turn, reduces the *language-related constraints* which, along with the financial and time constraints, impact on people's allocation of time between majority and minority language activities. All other things being equal, the lifting of such constraints should have a positive effect on minority language use, which can be measured in time units.

The rationale is the following: by making more accessible those ingredients that are part and parcel of conducting activities in the minority language, the policy reduces the latter's *relative price*. This price is implicit, because all the activities (taking place in one or another language) do not have a directly observable market price. "Optimal" practice of these activities (that is, the level that the individual speaker will choose as a result of his personal objectives and constraints) is therefore likely to increase. This result, however, obtains under the condition that the practice of activities are sufficiently strongly responsive to price changes—which will be the case under fairly general assumptions about individuals' behaviour (see Grin and Vaillancourt, 1998).

The possibility to read bilingual signs can be seen in two distinct perspectives. In the first one, bilingual signs are one (possibly secondary) component in the practice of complex activities such as "road travel" or (if other forms of public display are taken into account, such as the designation of official buildings), "conducting business with the authorities". Within each individual complex activity, the time impact, in terms of language use, of the availability of bilingual signs is likely to be small; however, given the frequency of such activities in the aggregate, the overall resulting "welshification" is probably far from negligible, and it becomes appropriate to interpret the provision of minority language visibility as a policy measure that brings down the relative implicit price of minority language activities<sup>5</sup>.

Second, language visibility is an important policy measure because its official use and the generalisation of minority language visibility has a powerful (re)legitimisation effect, which, in turn, impacts on people's attitudes. Research on language policy, no matter what discipline it hails from, confirms that positive attitudes are a *sine qua non* condition of language revitalisation. In a significant way, the visibility of the language contributes to it.

This chapter is concerned with official language visibility, that is, it does not address minority language signs or bilingual signs put up by private businesses. This, however, will be studied in Chapter 5, which deals with direct promotional efforts in favour of a minority language, where visual manifestations such as bilingual signs are often targeted.

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<sup>5</sup> We can also suppose that bilingual signs are an important element of language exposure for young children just learning to read.

### 2.3 The development of bilingual road signs in Wales

Bilingual road signs are by now so much a matter of course in Wales that the practice has become fully integrated into the normal operations of traffic administration. As a result, the linguistic aspect of these operations cannot be singled out, and there are practically no written documents on bilingual signs, apart from the Bowen report, which is already 27 years old (Bowen, 1972). As regards more recent documents, the question is addressed in passing in leaflets on proper language practices for the public sector (e.g., Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg, n.d.1) or on much broader language schemes (e.g., Welsh Office, 1996; Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg, n.d.2; n.d.3, n.d.4, n.d.5); most of the information reported here was gathered through informal interviews<sup>6</sup>.

According to our informants, lobbying by Welsh language organisations in the sixties played an important part in persuading the authorities to reconsider the legal status of Welsh; this resulted in the production of the Parry Report in the mid-sixties<sup>7</sup>. The momentum was maintained through the activism of the *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (Welsh Language Society) and the *Plaid Cymru* (Welsh Nationalist Party), which canvassed in favour of an extension of the visibility of Welsh, particularly along roads. A petition presented in November 1970 to the Secretary of State for Wales appealed “to make a clear declaration [...] that the government recognises in principle that all road-signs in Wales without exception must be bilingual (with the language of Wales before or after the English), and that it intends to act immediately in accordance with this principle and urges all local authorities in Wales to do likewise” (Bowen, 1972: 2).

Indeed, the visibility of Welsh has been among the early language planning measures adopted in Wales. It deserves the label because language visibility was generally not advocated on technical or utilitarian grounds, but as a means to enhance the position of Welsh in Wales. Provision for the use of Welsh on a “limited number of traffic signs” was first made in 1970, but until then, “local highway authorities could make individual applications to erect some kinds of local informatory signs in both English and Welsh and on a few occasions such applications had been made and authorised, but bilingual traffic signs were not allowed in any other case” (Bowen, 1972: 10).

Following the thrust of the Bowen Committee’s recommendations, the Welsh Office decided that bilingual signs should be placed along trunk roads, which are under its responsibility, as well as along side roads or secondary roads, which are under the authority of County councils. However, county councils acting as agents of the Welsh Office were put in charge of the practical implementation of the policy measure on all roads<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> We are particularly indebted to Ifor Gruffudd and Gwyn Jones (Welsh Office), Alan Wynne Jones (Menter a Busnes) and Dylan Roberts (Welsh Language Board) for their help.

<sup>7</sup> *Legal Status of the Welsh Language. Report of the Committee under the chairmanship of Sir David Hughes Parry*, October 1965.

<sup>8</sup> The Committee pondered the question of the order of precedence of the two languages on bilingual signs. They noted that “First, [...] the wording placed on top or on the left is likely to be assimilated more quickly. The great majority of road-users in Wales will look for the English rather than the Welsh wording on following traffic signs, and the findings of the Road Research Laboratory experiments with bilingual signs are that there is generally less increase in reading times if the English language comes first. Secondly, a number of the advocates of bilingual signs attach great importance to placing the Welsh first because it is

Neither the 1967 nor the 1993 Language Acts explicitly required road signs to be bilingual. Counties, however, were free to do so, and bilingualisation proceeded at an unequal pace depending on the county concerned, with counties with a higher percentage of Welsh-speaking population such as Gwynedd and Dyfed taking a lead. At this time, practically all road and traffic signs are bilingual, with occasional exceptions, for example in anglicised parts of Wales where old signs on secondary roads have not been replaced for a long time. Eventually, however, bilingualism should be complete.

#### ***2.4 Agencies responsible***

The setting up of bilingual road signs is placed under the responsibility of County councils. For secondary roads, this coincides with counties' legal authority; for trunk roads and motorways, which are under the jurisdiction of the Welsh Office, Counties are acting as agents of the Office. Counties enjoy a large degree of autonomy in the practical implementation of bilingual signs. First, it was considered impracticable to issue extremely precise regulations, because they would have run the risk of not doing full justice to local conditions; second, the Welsh Office realised that punctilious guidelines were more likely to cause resistance than to significantly enhance the effectiveness of the scheme (for example, imposing systematic precedence of Welsh over English or vice-versa could have created some antagonism); third, it was considered reasonable, for demolinguistic reasons, to expect some areas to prioritise Welsh, while others would put English first<sup>9</sup>.

Tracing responsibilities for current practices, however, is made more complicated by the fact that the administrative units of Wales were redrawn twice. The 1974 reform reduced the number of administrative units to 8; the 1996 one raised it to 23. In some cases (e.g., Powys), geographical boundaries were left untouched; in others (e.g. Dyfed), the existing county was broken down into geographically smaller units (Cardigan, Pembroke and Carmarthen). The new units are *Unitary Authorities* combining the competencies of the erstwhile counties and districts. Typically, all the units created as a result of the breaking up of larger former counties simply carried on the inherited practice.

#### ***2.5 Current policy practices***

At this time, practically all road signs in Wales are bilingual, whether for motorways, trunk roads or side roads. Exceptionally, some old signs on minor roads may still be monolingual and remain so until they are replaced. In addition, the Welsh Office allows for unilingual signs (unilingual meaning English only, not Welsh only) in "cases where road safety or technical considerations make it impossible to have fully bilingual signs" (Welsh Office, 1996: 8). For trunk roads and motorways, the Welsh Office would

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the indigenous language of Wales. We believe that this view carries excessively emotional overtones, but its existence must be recognised [...]. We gave close consideration to the question whether Welsh or English should be first [...] but finally decided by a substantial majority to recommend that the Welsh wording should be shown first on all bilingual traffic signs." (Bowen, 1972: 72).

<sup>9</sup> Occasionally, London-based administrations would be required to provide bilingual information. This is the case of the Department of Transport, whose Drivers' Licensing Agency is responsible for the Highway Code, which needs to be amended in order to reflect the existence of bilingual traffic signs in Wales.

normally expect the English text to precede the Welsh one. Bilingualism, however, remains unusual in the case of “variable signs”, notably electronic displays indicating the destination and stops of a train or bus. In such cases, only English is always present.

Bilingualisation generally proceeds apace with the normal replacement and refreshment of old signs, so that the cost of the bilingual sign policy is kept down.

Though not explicitly regulated by the new Language Act, bilingual signs are consistent with the latter’s objectives, and the conditions of its implementation appear to be influenced by some of the key principles of the Act. In particular, this implies that the policy is subject to the test of what is “appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable”, which is set out in Section 5(2) of the Act. In its 1991 proposals towards a new Act, the Welsh Language Board extensively discusses the legal implications of this criterion, concluding that it would not result in a toothless piece of legislation. It was considered that language requirements actually made under the Act would be presumed to be appropriate and reasonable, and that the burden of proof to show otherwise would fall upon the authority refusing to implement it. In the case of bilingual signs, the technical and conceptual simplicity of the measure, its increasingly non-conflictual nature, and its negligible cost ensured that it was never questioned—at least not on those grounds.

Another implication of the new language Act as regards bilingual road signs is that policy on the latter has now been swallowed up into the broader concept of *Welsh language schemes*. Under Section 21 of the 1993 Welsh Language Act, official bodies (particularly the unitary authorities) are required to prepare a document (a “scheme”) on the various measures they intend to take in order to guarantee that English and Welsh in Wales are treated on a basis of equality in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice. Schemes, drafted bilingually by the authorities concerned, must be submitted to and approved by the Welsh Language Office.

## 2.6 Costs

In its early days, responsibility for bilingual signs was left to the discretion of County authorities. When the Welsh Office decided to generalise the practice, it was understood that bilingual signs would replace unilingual ones as the former would need to be replaced or refreshed anyway, or as new signs were put up along new or redesigned roads. No figures are available regarding the cost of the policy, and according to our informants, almost no additional funds were necessary to implement it. However, this perception is not wholly correct. The direct marginal cost of bilingualisation comprises:

(i) *Material costs*. These are the result of: (a) the larger surface of sheet metal used for directional signs that feature two place-names instead of one (of course, this did not apply to place-names that exist in one language only, such as Aberystwyth); examples include the transformation of signs merely indicating “Cardiff” into signs mentioning both “Caerdydd” and “Cardiff”, or “Glamorgan (Rhoose) Airport” to “Maes glanio (Rhws) Morgannwg” and the anglicised version just mentioned; (b) added surfaces of sheet metal, particularly for informational signs where each separate sheet is used for one

language; an example could be “Cadwch mewn gêr isel”, added to the sign instructing motorists to “Keep in low gear”; and (c) additional support costs.

(ii) *Labour costs*. Because more words have to be painted, a slightly larger amount of work is involved, while larger or dual signs require more time to be installed.

Can we establish these costs? Let us examine the available evidence. The Bowen Committee estimated that, if all signs had to be replaced at once, total cost would be in the region of £3,275,000. This cost estimate was made up, in almost equal proportions, of two parts:

(i) the cost of providing signs to current standards wherever bilingual signs would be needed and where no sign to current standards already existed;

(ii) the additional cost of providing the bilingual element for the signs in (i), together with the cost of providing bilingual versions where applicable to replace existing monolingual signs which were already to current standards.

The minority report (opposing the recommendations of the Commission, and appended to the Bowen report) states (Bowen, 1972: 90) states that the cost increase for directional signs would stand at approximately £135 per sign for the (relatively expensive) directional signs with lettering of a minimum size of 4 in.; no estimate of cost increase for the relatively smaller warning and informational signs was provided. Taking account of the existence of these non-directional signs, we consider a per-sign marginal cost of £100 to be reasonable. Given that an estimated 77,000 signs would have been affected by the immediate bilingualisation policy (Bowen, 1972: 26), the cost would then amount to £7,700,000. This is far in excess of the £3,275,000 reported above estimated by the majority report (yielding a marginal cost per sign of £42.50). In this evaluation, we accept as a reasonable figure the mid-point in this range, that is, £75 per sign on average.

This amount must be corrected in order to express it in 1996 £ and to annualise it (1996 being the year for which calculations are made for all policies). Let us address each issue in turn:

(i) *Inflating to 1996 £*. We multiply this amount by the increase in the producer price index (output of all manufactured products) from 18.4 in 1972 to 123.8 in 1996, that is, 6.73, yielding  $£75 \times 6.73 = £505$ .<sup>10</sup>

(ii) *Annualising*. The other programmes examined in this study increase mainly current expenditures (wages for the most part) on an annual basis. In this case, we are incurring a capital expenditure with a finite life. Thus, its annual cost is made up of: (a) the annual yield of that capital (in real terms) and (b) the annual depreciation obtained by assuming straight-line depreciation of the sign over its useful life. In this study, we use a real yield of 7%, which is in the mid-range between riskless and real rates of return (3-5%) and

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<sup>10</sup> 1972 data from Economic Trends Annual Supplement, 1996-1997, p. 152, Table 2.1. 1996 data from Economic Trends, January, February 1997, p. T26, Table 3.1, published by the Office of National Statistics of the U.K. In the absence of relevant information, we have assumed that there had not been productivity changes that may have led to changes in the real production cost of signs.



estimates used in cost-benefit analysis of the opportunity cost of capital (10%), and a depreciation rate of 5%, that is, a useful life assumed to be 20 years.

Thus,  $505 \times (0.07+0.05)=£60.0$ , the annual cost per sign.

The total annual cost is then given by the number of signs multiplied by the cost per sign. We will assume an increase of 10% in the total number of signs since 1972. This estimate, once rounded, yields 85,000 signs and a total annual cost of bilingual signs in Wales of £5,100,000 (EUR 5,046,720). Clearly, this represents the cost, in 1996, of the completed policy<sup>11</sup>.

In addition to these direct costs, modifications to a limited number of documents (such as the Highway Code) required spending money on translation. These, however, are modest and once-and-for-all expenditures and are not accounted for here.

The direct benefits of these bilingual signs depend on their usage, and this depends on the number of Welsh speakers (strictly speaking, readers), on their amount of travel time and on the share of the travel time allocated to reading signs. We use the following figures:

- ✧ *Number of Welsh speakers.* This is set conservatively at 500,000, slightly less than the 508,000 reported in the 1991 Census.
- ✧ *Travel time.* In 1992-1994, each UK resident spent 360 hours on travel, on average, of which 80% was in car travel. Given shorter commuting time in Wales, we calculate an average car travel time in Wales of 240 hours per year<sup>12</sup>.
- ✧ *Share of travel time spent reading signs.* No data are available on this question, but a reasonable upper bound is 2%, i.e., 5.8 hours rounded off to 5, especially since Welsh users are more than proportionately local area residents who are likely to use signs relatively less.

We obtain a total of 2,500,000 person-hours of Welsh usage for a cost of £5,100,000, yielding a cost per person-hour of EUR 1.98.

These estimates, however, do not take into account a whole range of non-use impacts. These are mostly connected with the relegitimation of the language and the subsequent positive image change. This affects not just Welsh-speakers, but anglophone residents and visitors from the outside as well.

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<sup>11</sup> In the original study, all the amounts were converted in NZD (New Zealand dollars), adopting an average exchange rate of 1:2.2 between the New Zealand dollar and the British pound for 1996, which is the relevant year for our calculations. In this study, we have converted these amounts into Euros (EUR). However, since the Euro did not exist in 1996, we used its course on 1st January 1999, the date of its introduction, where 1 NZD = 0.4506 EUR (1 EUR = 2.2194 NZD).

<sup>12</sup> Travel time and share of car travel are provided by Social Trends 1996, p. 204. Average commuter time in Wales is 20 minutes and in the UK as a whole, 24 minutes (Table 12.4, p. 201). Thus,  $360 \times 0.8 \times 0.833 = 240$  hours.

## 2.7 Outcomes

If the policy of having bilingual signs in Wales is to be evaluated in terms of the visibility of Welsh, it must be considered a success, since bilingualism along all roads is now the rule. However, the notion of equal treatment of English and Welsh implies that Wales has not been given a “Welsh face”, but a “bilingual face” where both language are visible and English comes first more often than Welsh does.

82% of respondents in the NOP Survey (NOP, 1995) agreed that bilingual signs were a good idea. Positive views were stronger among young people, with 94% of those under 35 agreeing, among Welsh speakers (96%) and people with children (87%). Support for bilingual signs was lowest among respondents aged 65 and over, where it still reaches a very respectable 71%. Respondents were also asked to rank-order a variety of visibility-increasing measures; 21% of respondents mentioned bilingual signs as the most important of the measures proposed (Table 2).

TABLE 2  
PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO CONSIDERED EACH ACTIVITY  
TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT

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Badges showing who are the Welsh-speaking staff	49%
Providing bilingual signs	21%
Producing bilingual forms and leaflets	10%
Making bilingual adverts	8%
Bilingual packaging on goods	5%
Don't know	2%

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*N=815. Source: NOP, 1995: 59.*

One interesting implication of these figures is the large difference (28 percentage points) between the percentage of people who consider the first and second activity respectively to be the most important. The very high share of respondents who would like Welsh-speakers among staff in the private or public sector to be readily identifiable suggests that many would like to use the language, but feel constrained in doing so. Reasons may be fear of rejection by an anglophone interlocutor, or the wish not to come across as a militant for the language-if this latter factor does play a part, it could also indicate that the use of Welsh is still far from *normalised* in the Catalan sense. In either case, this finding is consistent with another from the same survey, showing that 39% of respondents who can speak at least a few sentences would “like more chance” to use Welsh when contacting public services, 39% when contacting privatised services, 36% when shopping, 31% in social situations, 21% at work, and 21% at home.

The Welsh Office reports no complaints about the policy; fear that people might get lost (a sometimes mentioned, though rather implausible argument against bilingual signs) have proved unfounded. The only occasional complaints came from residents criticising the fact that the English version appeared above the Welsh one, particularly in areas where the percentage of Welsh speakers is high. If any ambiguity arises from the policy, it may be that people often believe that the visible presence of Welsh is much more of a

legal obligation than is actually the case; this goes to show that practice has gone further than the law towards increasing the visibility of the language<sup>13</sup>.

The success of a policy, however, must also be evaluated in terms of less obvious and more general outcomes, first and foremost language use.

As indicated above, the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between the provision of bilingual road signs (or language visibility more generally) and the long-term fortunes of the language appears sensible; however, the precise workings of such a causal link have not, to our knowledge, been explored in detail. At the empirical level, the data that would be required to test a statistical association between both simply do not exist<sup>14</sup>. Still, it stands to reason that the visibility of the language on road signs and other forms of public signs increases the average welshness of the practice of an activity such as “road travel”, and over time, this effect is probably not negligible, as suggested by our estimates in the preceding section.

Subsequent judgement on the effectiveness of the policy can vary according to the units of measurement used. In comparison with other policy measures, the time impact of the policy is not high, given the small share of travel time devoted to reading signs. This, however, is also subject to assumptions about the homogeneity of time units (the latter may not have the same subjective value and significance, and even a small amount of time can have major significance; see Winston, 1987). More importantly, the effect on language use can be an indirect one, and be mediated through language attitudes.

First, all informants agree that bilingual signs have a considerable psychological and symbolic importance. Its visible presence alongside English was perceived across Wales as a clear message on the relevance and legitimacy of the language. Second, the practice of bilingual official signs has had an important incentive effect on the private sector. Many businesses decided to put up bilingual signs out of sympathy for the language and a wish to be perceived as being part of a more general trend. It also appears that some businesses (particularly those run or owned by non-Welsh speakers) assumed that the generalisation of bilingual signs reflected not good will, but some legal obligation they should comply with as well (in itself, the implicit assumption that there could be no other good reason for using a minority language is a telling one), and set about putting up bilingual signs of their own, thereby further advancing the visibility of Welsh. The *Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg* subsequently decided to support private initiatives, and gives small grants for putting up private bilingual signs; as a rule, such grants cover 50% of the cost of the new sign. An effort is made by the Board to favour “cluster schemes”, for

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<sup>13</sup> It is not without interest to briefly mention those arguments that were put forward by the Minority Report, appended to the Bowen Committee findings, against bilingual signs. The first regarded road safety, which experience has proved to be unfounded; the second claimed a “detrimental effect on landscape, townscape and amenity”, and this argument has now proved counterfactual, with the Welsh Tourist Board recognising that the visibility of the language makes a positive contribution to the identity of the place, and has now become a selling point for tourism in Wales; the third warned of excessive cost, but was rendered pointless by the progressive bilingualisation of signs.

<sup>14</sup> As an indirect measurement, the total sample of 815 used in the NOP Survey could be used to perform an adjusted residuals analysis of the correspondence between the relative importance given to bilingual signs and patterns of language use.

example when the businesses of a whole neighbourhood apply together for such grants; clusters are considered to have a stronger visual impact than isolated bilingual signs.

The *Bwrdd Croeso Cymru* (Welsh Tourist Board) sees additional benefits in bilingual signs, and uses their existence as a selling point, contributing to the “sense of place” that Wales offers to its visitors, from England or elsewhere (see *Bwrdd Croeso Cymru & Menter a Busnes*, n.d.).

## **2.8 Evaluation**

There is something self-evident about the generalisation of bilingual signs as a policy measure. Its technical and conceptual ease, its reasonable total cost, and the facility with which it can be advocated on a variety of grounds (economic, legal or political) make it a favourite of language planners. Compulsory or non-compulsory schemes exist in other minority language contexts; in most cases, they result in the generalisation of bilingual signs, though in some, only the minority language is mentioned (for example in Quebec)<sup>15</sup>.

However, the symbolic and psychological impact of bilingual signs, as well as the induced effects of the kind described in the preceding section, must not be underestimated. In the words of Allan Wynne Jones, former President of the Council of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, bilingual road signs in Wales not only have made a major difference, but the latter is “out of proportion entirely” with the negligible amounts of money it has cost. Nevertheless, as we shall see later by comparing its cost with that of other policies, bilingual signage turns out to be a relatively expensive measure in terms of the unit cost of language use created. It follows that its indirect effects through language attitudes must be considerable, if it is to be judged cost-effective in comparison with other policies.

Circumstantial evidence suggests that these indirect effects are, indeed, important; hence, increasing and generalising the visibility of the minority language on road and other signs, whether they are bilingual or use the minority language only, is a natural component of any revitalisation policy. Taking the issue the other way around, the absence of minority language visibility, or authorities’ refusal to increase such visibility, is difficult to defend on human rights grounds; it may also be interpreted as a clear sign that they are not genuinely committed to the promotion of the language in question. We have shown elsewhere (Grin, 1992) that under a set of plausible technical assumptions, the commitment of authorities can prove indispensable to promotional policies, because this commitment may help counter pessimistic expectations about the future of a minority language.

Among the conditions that make bilingual signs a successful policy instruments in the Welsh context, the demand side has played a crucial role. The drive for the introduction and generalisation of bilingual signs was largely initiated by members or sympathisers of

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<sup>15</sup> Some authors or politicians insist that in Quebec, French is the majority language, and English the minority language. This should not obscure the fact that in Canada (and even more so in North America), French is in a minority position with respect to English, and that this more obviously justifies Quebec’s language policies.

the *Plaid Cymru* or the *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg*, whose stand on the matter progressively gained credence with larger segments of the Welsh-speaking public, and then the non-Welsh speaking population as well. Bilingual signs were not put up as the result of a spontaneous choice by British authorities to give Welsh more visibility; like most other positive measures or concessions in favour of the language, it had to be wrested from the government. This confirms the overwhelming importance of *attitudes* (which, using the jargon of economic analysis, are very close to the structure of *preferences* that lie at the root of utility and demand functions) as a driving force in minority language revitalisation.

This does not imply, however, that the sole burden of a revitalisation policy should be put on the shoulders of the public, particularly minority-language speakers themselves. Although their involvement and concern is a *sine qua non* condition of success, an exclusive or excessive reliance on attitudes puts revitalisation at the mercy of discouragement in the public. It is therefore incumbent upon the authorities not only to meet demand (as the Welsh Office did when deciding to generalise the visibility of Welsh in road and traffic signs), but also to exhibit sufficient commitment to language revitalisation, and be prepared to take a political lead when circumstances require it.

### 3. MINORITY LANGUAGE TELEVISION: THE CASE OF SIANEL PEDWAR CYMRU (S4C)

#### 3.1 Background

Since Section 2.1 contains an introduction to the Welsh context, there is no need for this information to be repeated. Only a few elements that pertain directly to the media context will be added here.

The development of television broadcasting in Welsh can be seen as the result of a changing policy context in favour of Welsh around the mid-20th century. As of 1964, BBC Wales was required to provide 6 hours per week of Welsh-medium television programming, but such programmes (aired on BBC1 and ITV) could only be watched in South Wales. This awkward situation created dissatisfaction among both Welsh and non-Welsh speakers, though for opposite reasons: the former complained about the poor timing (usually late-night slots) and very limited range and number of programmes available in their language, while disgruntled unilingual anglophones, quite apart from feeling shut out from programmes they could not understand, felt deprived of possible English-language viewing time.

The proposal to set up a Welsh-language television channel emerged as the result of a consensus between speakers of Welsh and English during a conference held in 1973. British authorities subsequently appeared to go back on their endorsement of this proposal, but political pressure in which the *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (Welsh Language Society) and the *Plaid Cymru* (Welsh Nationalist Party) played a decisive role finally persuaded them to implement it, and S4C went on the air on 1 November 1982. In the fifteen years since, S4C has established its role as a key element of Welsh language revitalisation.

#### 3.2 Minority language broadcasting as language policy

Minority language broadcasting is undoubtedly one of the most meaningful forms of provision of minority language goods and services, and one which substantially alters the supply-side factors of the linguistic environment. Its importance is twofold.

First, its mere existence has powerful symbolic implications, in that it contains potential for establishing the legitimacy of a minority language in the sphere of modernity—a key strategic area, since revitalisation efforts are typically bogged down by the association between a minority language and the “traditional” sphere. The question of the association between a language and the traditions that are powerful outward manifestations of its culture deserve a few words of commentary. We do not mean to say that reference to the realm of tradition should be phased out from revitalisation efforts, since this would imply a *de facto* endorsement of the so-called “deficiency model” equating minority languages

with backwardness, and espousal of majority culture as progress (G. Williams, 1992); we also reject this essentialist approach, and adopt a more dynamic view of language in human experience. What we mean is that to the extent that minority languages almost always are associated with tradition, it is important to demonstrate that they are not trapped in it, and that they can also give access to aspects of everyday life that are usually associated with modernity. This stresses the potential of any language, as well as the dynamic aspects of the associated culture, and television broadcasting is a key element of such a demonstration.

We are aware that such a view could be misconstrued as an instrumental perspective on language. We do not agree with such a label if it is taken in a narrow sense. Our point, however, is that language is a vehicle for human exchange and experience, particularly its cultural aspects, and that language can be used to express changing cultural values. Because culture is dynamic and cultural values change, it would be misguided to assign to language, as its sole or main function, that of reflecting a culture as it manifests itself at a given point in time.

Second, television watching is nowadays a essential part of leisure activities for large tracts of the population, particularly the young. Offering minority language programming is therefore likely to have a significant impact on actual minority language use. This aspect has a direct connection with an entirely different justification whose operative concept is that of language rights, as pointed out by Thomas (1997): “a language is a group of people speaking to each other, and (...) in modern conditions much of that communication occurs through the media, so that language denied access to media is discriminated against, accorded inferior status, and is unlikely to survive.”

In terms of our underlying model of language policy and behaviour, the provision of minority language programming affects patterns of language use in the same way as other types of supply of minority language goods and services do. They make the practice of minority language activities requiring these services cheaper. Analytically, this interpretation in terms of shadow price represents a generalisation of the special case that can usually be observed: in the absence of state-sponsored provision of minority language programming, no such programming is available at all, which means that the implicit price of the activity “watching minority language television” tends to infinity. The relative price change induced by the introduction of minority language programming is therefore likely to bring about a net increase in the practice of the activity, and in the time devoted to minority language use.

However, just like other promotional measures, the introduction of minority language programming can have a powerful relegitimising effect impacting on people’s language attitudes; these, in turn, affect the utility function and positively alter the attractiveness of minority language activities-in this case, television watching. This may be particularly true of younger viewers, and Baker (1992: 110) points out that “television, records, cassettes, videos, satellite broadcasts, films, radio and computer software are often regarded as having an influence on the language attitudes of teenagers in particular”.

### 3.3 “*Yr unig ateb*”: the development of S4C

The creation of S4C would not have taken place without militant mobilisation and significant popular support, relayed by associations and political parties; *Plaid Cymru* MP Gwynfor Evans threatened to go on a hunger strike when British authorities appeared to renege on their commitment to set up a Welsh language television channel. These events epitomised a conflictual relationship between London and the supporters of the Welsh language, at a time when the holiday homes of English holiday-makers were occasionally prey to arson, and nationalist activists cut off power supply in protest against the monopoly of the English language on the air. As noted earlier, the introduction of limited programming in Welsh on the BBC had not satisfied Welsh demands, because programmes were few and inconveniently timed, while unilingual English-speaking viewers begrudged the hours taken away from programming in English. Separation was therefore seen as a solution to this conflict, as well as a sensible step towards the easing of tensions, and the creation of S4C (presented by language activists as *yr unig ateb*, “the only answer”) resulted from consensus between groups of viewers with diverging interests.

It also benefited from the simultaneous launch of a new concept in television programming, namely, the setting up of Britain’s Channel 4 as a distributing rather than a producing channel—to this day, S4C, which is a decentralised branch of Channel 4, has no in-house production facilities. This formula has spread since then, and even the BBC is now required to buy some of its programmes from outside producers.

The fact that the creation of S4C was a concession wrested from British authorities placed the channel in a position very different from Euskal Telebista in Euskadi or Teilifís na Gaeilge in Ireland, which were established by regional or national authorities as part of a broader language policy enterprise. S4C (which is dependent on grant aid—see Section 3.6) was in a more precarious political position, and needed from the start to emphasise quality and appeal to viewers in order to establish itself in a competitive media environment<sup>16</sup>.

Besides, the fact that S4C’s audience is bilingual in English and Welsh, and that its competitor language is English, implied that it would have made little sense to air dubbed or subtitled versions of major American (or British) productions, because S4C’s audience could very well watch (or have watched) these programmes on English-medium British channels. This has forced S4C to engage early on (more quickly, at least, than Basque or Catalan television had to) in the commissioning of new programmes, giving it a distinct identity that other television services, even in major European languages, do not necessarily provide. In this respect, the creation of S4C was well-timed, because it coincided with the emergence of an increased awareness of the “value” of pluralism or diversity, and the implied social liberalism, in this case, was not out of step with the economic liberalism of the Thatcher years.

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<sup>16</sup> S4C’s direct competitor is the BBC, whose products are regarded by many as comprising some of the best television in the world.



### **3.4 Agencies responsible**

S4C, which has been operating since 1982, was established by the 1980/81 Broadcasting Act, and currently operates under Sections 56 and 57 of the 1990 Broadcasting Act. Its primary purpose is to provide “a wide range of high quality programmes for broadcast on the Fourth Channel in Wales, including the provision of Welsh language programmes for broadcast during peak viewing hours” (S4C, 1996b). The 1996 Broadcasting Act gives S4C equal status with other broadcasters, charging it to develop commercially as well as technically.

Until 1982, a limited amount of Welsh language programming was available on BBC1 and ITV schedules. The establishment of S4C created a comprehensive Welsh medium service, and all Welsh language programmes are now transmitted on S4C.

The broadcasting company commissions a large number of independent producers<sup>17</sup> for about two thirds of its Welsh language programmes, while one third is provided free of charge by the BBC, under Section 58 of the 1990 Broadcasting Act. S4C also broadcasts Channel 4 English-language programmes (also provided free of charge under the same Section), transmitting (in 1996) some 73% of the latter, and amounting to about two thirds of total programming.

### **3.5 Output**

#### *Programming*

In 1996, S4C aired 1,677 hours of Welsh language programming covering the following genres:

- ✧ Drama targeting a large audience has been made a priority, and features highly successful series such as *Pobol y Cwm* (“The people of the valley”), which is also the longest-running soap opera on the BBC; some series are co-productions with foreign broadcasters. Drama output also includes films, some of them earning international attention (for example, *Hedd Wyn* was nominated for an Oscar in the best foreign film category in 1994, and *Yn Gymysg Oll I Gyd* won the gold medal for the best television film at the San Francisco Film Festival).
- ✧ Animation is a strategically important aspect of programming, because of its appeal to children. S4C gives priority to quality cartoons, some of it strictly entertainment, but some also offering historical or literary content. Some of this production is the result of co-operation between Welsh and Russian animators, resulting in “a new kind of animated series in complete contrast to the output of America and the Far East” (S4C, 1996a: 20).

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<sup>17</sup> At the time of writing, producing companies included *Opus*, *Bryngwyn*, *Penadur*, *Ffilmiau'r Nant*, *HTV1* (the local ITV licence holder), *Pontcanna*, *Ffilmiau Lliffon*, *Lluniau Lliw*, *Elidir*, etc. Whereas BBC Wales and HTV are concentrated in Cardiff, the independent producers have established themselves throughout Welsh-speaking areas, particularly the North-West, creating an estimated 3,000 industry-related jobs (Thomas 1997: 2).

- ✧ Light Entertainment includes comedy (combining old favourites and experimentation), quizzes and game shows aired on prime time.
- ✧ Children's and youth programming includes some lunch-time and late-afternoon shows, covering a wide range of genres (entertainment, quizzes, game shows, magazines, and a twice-weekly soap opera).
- ✧ Learners' programmes include one series aimed at adults and one aimed at children.
- ✧ News and factual programmes include daily news bulletins supplied by BBC Wales, the nightly current affairs magazine *Heno* ("Today") and investigative reporting.
- ✧ Music programming has a high profile on S4C, and emphasises live prestigious events, some classical, others offering folk and traditional music. Programming of Welsh pop and rock music is currently being developed.
- ✧ Sport programming provides an important boost to S4C, which has acquired (in association with HTV) the television rights to Welsh club rugby. S4C offers live coverage of international games, attracting a considerable non-Welsh speaking audience. This contributes in another way to the visibility of the language.

### *Subtitling*

Almost 75% of Welsh language programmes (1,245 hours and 75 minutes in 1996) are subtitled in English on teletext page 888. In addition, subtitles in Welsh of Welsh programmes are provided for the benefit of learners on teletext page 889 (300 hours and 43 minutes in 1996). Finally, S4C is also responsible for subtitling in Welsh some of the English-language programmes from Channel 4 aired on S4C; covering 2,843 hours and 23 minutes of these programmes in 1996. It is important to remember that S4C is not strictly a Welsh-language channel.

### *Key figures*

In 1996, S4C has transmitted 7,169 hours, representing an average per week of 137.9 hours; the breakdown by language is provided in Table 3:

TABLE 3  
BREAKDOWN OF S4C PROGRAMMING BY LANGUAGE, HOURS, 1996

Welsh		English	
Commissioned programmes	905	Original programming	4,541
Repeats	236	Repeats	951
BBC	536		
Total	1677	Total	5492
<i>average per week</i>	<i>32.3</i>	<i>average per week</i>	<i>105.6</i>

*source: S4C, 1996b: 4.*

Of the programmes in Welsh, 1,072 hours were transmitted between 6.30 p.m. and 10.00 p.m., with a weekly average of 21 hours.

Table 4 provides the breakdown of programmes by language and genre:

TABLE 4  
BREAKDOWN OF S4C PROGRAMMING BY LANGUAGE AND GENRE, HOURS, 1996

Genre	Commissioned programmes	BBC Wales	Channel 4
	Welsh		English
Drama	85	96	450
News and current affairs	287	240	1305
Light entertainment	168	7	1305
Youth and children	169	23	317
Music and arts	76	41	73
Education	16	39	162
Sport	70	89	523
Religion	34	1	17
<i>Total</i>	<i>905</i>	<i>536</i>	<i>4541</i>

*source: S4C, 1996b: 4.*

#### *Airtime sales and sponsorship*

S4C started selling commercial airtime in January 1993, and 1994 saw a 55% expansion in the volume of sales. After this initial jump, sales have kept progressing, albeit at a slower pace. A volume of sales of £6.7 million in 1996 still represented an increase of 4.7% on the preceding year, a very good result given market trends favouring London- or South East-based broadcasters.

Bilingual advertising has now become the norm (over 75%) among local advertisers on S4C, although the channel points out that companies initially needed to be educated about the benefits of advertising in Welsh. Major companies resorting to bilingual advertising include McDonald's, the National Lottery, Volvo, Ford, Braun, Nissan, Standard Life, the Sunday Times and Tropicana Juice. Some advertisers have chosen to dub their commercials into Welsh throughout the year, instead of confining themselves to single Welsh-language campaigns. S4C offers practical assistance to companies wishing to advertise in Welsh on the channel, particularly for smaller advertisers. Options offered to advertisers include adding relevant material on teletext at minimal extra cost.

S4C has also developed broadcast sponsorship, which increased by 50% in 1996 over the previous year. Sponsors include the Midland Bank, the Bank of Wales, British Telecom, British Case Home Energy and The Guardian.

#### *Other aspects*

Facing stiff competition from other broadcasters with an extremely high reputation, notably the BBC's English-language service, S4C has had to aim at quality and appeal from the start. In addition, the bilingualism of all its Welsh-speaking audience implies that the latter is not a captive audience. Language itself is a selling point, and Thomas (1997) insists that there is such a thing as language loyalty on TV; however, S4C's chief executive has stated that "viewers do not turn to S4C simply because the programmes are in Welsh; they also expect them to be good" (S4C, 1996a: 9).

As indicated earlier, one constraint specific to S4C is that it was not advisable to simply dub English-language programmes that viewers could access on English-language television, forcing S4C to engage early on in the commissioning of original productions.

The insistence on quality, originality and relevance has encouraged local talent and seems (although observers indicate the evidence is not sufficiently clear) to have had a positive effect on language corpus and on the knowledge of Welsh; in particular, television is an irreplaceable tool for disseminating and popularising controlled neologisms.

Finally, it is interesting to look at the S4C experience in relation with the "mainstreaming" versus "special purpose television" debate. If we define mainstreaming as the inclusion of minority-language programmes on majority language television, whereas "special purpose" denotes the option to set up a separate channel where the minority language has a privileged or exclusive position, S4C clearly represents an instance of the latter strategy. It has emerged in part because the former system, whereby a limited amount of Welsh programming was available at off-peak hours on English-language television, seemed to antagonise both Welsh speakers and unilingual anglophones-hence the view that a Welsh-language channel represented "yr unig ateb", the only solution.

Since then, the proliferation of channels made possible by cable television has confirmed that one of the goals pursued by mainstreaming, namely, to increase awareness, among the majority public, about the minority language, has been completely outstripped by

technological progress. If a majority language watcher wishes to be exposed to the minority language, she can select the corresponding channel. If, on the contrary, she resents the presence of the minority language on her (predominantly) majority language channel, the increasing range of stations available gives her ample choice to switch to another channel more to her liking. As a means to expose (possibly reluctant) majority language audiences to the minority language and its culture, mainstreaming is probably a doomed strategy. This does not mean that the underlying objective is not a valid one, but that it must be pursued through other means.

### 3.6 Costs

#### *Expenditure*

S4C's 1996 budget amounted to £70.321m (using the conversion described in the preceding chapter, this amounts to EUR 7.203m) for the costs of the programme service, plus £7.266m (EUR 69.711m) for operational costs and administrative expenses. Of the programming cost, £59.961m (EUR 59.441m) went to cover programmes commissioned or acquired from suppliers. The value of the total programming output is, of course, much higher, since programmes provided by BBC Wales and Channel 4 are free of charge for S4C.

#### *Funding and other income*

S4C is funded by an annual budget from the Treasury, based on a rate of 3.2% of the Net Advertising Revenue of all terrestrial television in the UK. This rule implies that S4C's revenue depends on the state of the economy. In addition, S4C earns advertising revenue and raises sponsorship money (see preceding section). Table 5 below shows the income and expenditure account of the channel.

TABLE 5  
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT, 1996

Item	£ (x000)	EUR (x000)
Income (a)	68,059	67,468
Cost of programmes	(65,483)	(64,915)
Transmission and distribution	(4,838)	(4,345)
Operational and operative expenses	(7,266)	(7,203)
Other income less expenditure (b)	7,758	7,691
Operating deficit (c)	(1,770)	(1,755)

*source: S4C, 1996b: 16 ff.*

*a: net of transfers to deferred income.*

*b: programming and air time sales plus publishing and merchandising, minus direct cost of sales, share of income due to third parties, and operational and administrative expenses.*

*c: covered by interest receivable mostly from short time deposits.*

Total expenditure (excepting outlays connected with the generation of additional income, e.g. advertising) therefore amounted to £77.587m (EUR 76.914m) in 1996. Adopting a

conservative estimate of 495,000 speakers for 1996 (under the assumption that because of the age structure of Welsh-speakers, the current total is slightly lower than the number counted in the 1991 Census and reported in Table 2.14), expenditure per speaker in that year stands at £156.74 (EUR 155.38). If the target public is supposed to include the entire population of Wales, cost per capita is £28.40 (EUR 28.15) per year<sup>18</sup>.

Turning now to costs per person-hour, we start by observing that the average viewership over the entire broadcasting period in Welsh can be estimated at 20%. This evaluation is derived from the following figures. During peak-hour viewing time, the reported share of “Welsh Speakers” was 18.8% in 1995 and 19.9% in 1996. For overall Welsh language hours, the share of Welsh speakers was in a similar range (19.7% in the last quarter of 1995, and 20.1% in the two final quarters of 1996). Multiplying this by a conservative estimate of 495,000 speakers for 1996 (under the assumption that because of the age structure of Welsh-speakers, the current total is slightly lower than was counted in the 1991 Census), average viewership per Welsh hour stands at approximately 99,000, which we round off to 100,000 people. This figure can then be multiplied by the number of Welsh hours in the same year, that is, 1,677, yielding a total 167.7m person-hours. Expenditure per person hour is obtained by dividing total expenditure (£77.587m or EUR 76.914m) by the number of person-hours (167.7m), yielding a cost per person-hour of £0.463 (EUR 0.459) rounded to 50 cents.

Taking into account the fact that S4C reaches a large number of non-Welsh speakers (particularly non-Welsh speaking family members of Welsh speakers and watchers of sports programmes generally), and that the resulting exposure of non-speakers to the Welsh language is ultimately meaningful in a language policy perspective, the above figures clearly represent upper-bound estimates of actual costs.

### *Cost of programmes*

Cost per hour of the commissioned programmes can vary widely, as indicated by Table 6 below:

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<sup>18</sup> This ratio is calculated under the assumption that the total resident population in Wales has remained constant between 1991 and 1996.

TABLE 6  
AVERAGE HOURLY COST OF COMMISSIONED PROGRAMMES, 1996

Genre	£	EUR (a)
Drama	185,181	183,574
News and current affairs	37,121	36,799
Light entertainment	66,035	65,462
Youth and children	50,799	50,358
Music and arts	69,738	69,133
Education	55,461	54,980
Sport	27,649	27,409
Religion	95,869	95,037

source: S4C, 1996b: 4.

a: rounded to nearest Euro.

### *Staffing*

Because there is practically no in-house production, S4C operated in 1996 with a modest staff of about 140, an increase of 10 employees on the preceding year, in the following tasks: programme commissioning and presentation, 41; finance, business affairs and administration: 38; marketing, press and publicity, 27; engineering, 34.

Operational and administrative staff costs amounted to £1,598,000 (EUR 1,584,129) in 1996, just above 2% of total expenditure.

Apart from employment with S4C proper, an estimated 3,000 jobs have been created throughout Wales in and around the small companies producing S4C's Welsh-language programmes.

### **3.7 Outcomes**

It is next to impossible to establish a definite causal link from the provision of minority language television programming to the fortunes of the language, and Thomas (1997: 4) judiciously observes that "little research has been done in the field and in any case it would be difficult to distinguish the effect of television from that of other dynamic forces in society with which it interacts."

Yet, the evolution of Welsh on different planes can be seen, at least in part, as influenced by various promotional measures, in which the existence of S4C certainly is a cornerstone. Thomas (1997: 5) adds: "if we ask whether the Welsh television channel is helping the Welsh language to survive, the answer must undoubtedly be yes. The position of the language is still precarious, but without the media it would be far more marginal." Hence, it is probably a reasonable assumption-in line with our theoretical model-to suppose that there is a positive relationship between the provision of minority language programming on the one hand, and the position of the language on the other hand, and that looking at the latter provides relevant insights into the efficiency of the

former. This can be assessed using various indicators, particularly patterns of language use, attitudes, and demolinguistic figures.

*Patterns of language use*

The most direct effect of the availability of Welsh-medium television is, of course, an increase in television viewing time in the language. A quantitative estimation of total audience has been given in Section 3.6, but the NOP survey ("NOP Social and Political", 1995) contains a wealth of qualitative information about public attitudes to the Welsh language and the use of Welsh. A few of the questions submitted to a sample of 815 respondents directly address media issues.

S4C could be received by 92% of those who own a television set and by 97% of Welsh-speakers, but only by 87% of those who cannot speak Welsh at all. 61% of those who could receive S4C, irrespective of their being able to speak Welsh or not, reported that they watched some programmes in Welsh; 60% of fluent Welsh speakers claim to watch at least half of their television on Welsh-language S4C programmes. Table 7 indicates the relative success of various types of programmes in Welsh. The success of programmes requiring high-level linguistic competence (news, soaps and comedy) as opposed to some of the presumably less demanding ones (sport and light entertainment) provides indirect confirmation that Welsh-medium television is really being used by its target audience.



TABLE 7  
 PROGRAMMES WATCHED IN WELSH ON S4C, PERCENTAGES  
 (n=339 [all welsh speakers watching any welsh language programme];  
 original sample size n=815)

Genre	Total subsample	Men	Women	Fluent	Basic
		151	188	239	64
Sport	50	75	28	49	51
Light entertainment	49	45	53	63	31
Comedy	40	38	41	54	19
News	60	65	56	80	29
Current affairs	33	36	31	49	12
Arts	16	18	15	21	10
Children's	27	22	31	24	30
Soaps	72	62	81	79	62

source: NOP (1995: 47).

Let us now turn to ratings figures. Peak hour ratings among all Welsh-speakers have increased to 19.9%, reaching 26% among those Welsh-speakers living in a Welsh-speaking household. If the denominator includes only fluent Welsh-speakers, the corresponding figures are 32% and 6%. These figures, which are 1996 average values, all represent increases over the preceding year, except for the last group. Increases are credited to a more precise scheduling policy (S4C, 1996a: 32). Maximum audiences for certain music and sport broadcasts in Welsh aired on Saturday and Sunday night exceeded 200,000 viewers, while audiences for the well-known drama series *Pobol y Cwm*, depending on day and hour, ranged from 163,000 to 183,000. By way of comparison, the largest audiences for English-language programmes on S4C was reached by a drama series, with 287,000 viewers.

However, it is the evolution of patterns of language use over time (particularly over time spans longer than from one year to the next) that constitutes the single most important indicator of the success of a revitalisation policy. Although an adequate number of speakers is an absolute precondition, Gruffudd and Morgan (1997: 305) aptly observe that "at their peril would threatened language adherents rest on their laurels when the number of young people speaking the language increases, as the census figures of 1991 showed to be the case in Wales." They go on to stress the importance of the availability of the language in an adequate number of domains, and the media is obviously one of them. However, there is very little hard information on the evolution of patterns of language use over time, let alone about the effect that the creation of S4C may have had on such patterns. Nevertheless, the following comments can be made.

S4C plays a crucial role in the media-related leisure activities, because "in many spheres of the media, Welsh does not have a presence at all" (Gruffudd, 1996). There is no Welsh-language daily newspaper, and the written media include a Welsh-language network of *papurau bro* (community or neighbourhood papers), and a few weekly or

monthly magazines (some of them sponsored by the Welsh Arts Council or the Book Council of Wales). Some 500 to 600 books are published in Welsh each year, but radio and television clearly dominate the Welsh-language media.

While the creation of S4C has clearly made it possible to increase the practice of a leisure activity in Welsh, we can only make assumptions about its induced effect on other domains, particularly in the absence of relevant time series data. Using a sample of 329 young adults (all of them speakers of Welsh as a first or second language) coming from different family and/or linguistic backgrounds in the (mostly anglicised) Abertawe/Swansea area, Gruffudd and Morgan (1997) investigated their patterns of language use. Their figures reveal an overwhelming tendency to watch English television, to read English magazines and books, to listen to English radio and music—however, the authors claim that this simply reflects the availability and dominance of English-speaking media. If this claim is correct, then the provision of such minority language services can be expected to result in a significant increase in the practice of activities where these services are necessary. Figures on the amount of Welsh used in various types of activities confirm the strategic relevance, for language planners, of targeting aspects of language use that are associated with leisure activities, particularly in areas where English is the first language of a majority of residents.

TABLE 8  
SHARE OF WELSH IN VARIOUS NON-WORK ACTIVITIES  
BILINGUAL YOUNG ADULTS IN ABERTAWE/SWANSEA AREA, PERCENTAGES\*

Domain	Welsh only	More Welsh	More English	English only
Chapel	57.5	10.5	7.2	15.5
Dance	5.4	8.3	25.6	42.6
Sports	7.3	13.1	31.0	32.5
Pub	5.8	13.6	25.5	38.4
Yr Urdd**	45.7	27.6	4.3	12.1
Cinema	6.4	8.7	20.9	49.8

\*:  $n=239$ ; \*\*: *Welsh Youth League*

Finally, moving on to a wider selection of domains, it is interesting to report the following figures from the NOP Survey:

TABLE 9  
HOW OFTEN WELSH IS USED, PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS  
(*n=384 [all respondents who can speak at least a few sentences in Welsh]*)

Domain	Nearly always	Occasionally	Never	Not app.
At work	26	20	16	37
At home	51	25	23	*
When shopping	30	34	35	1
When contacting public services	26	25	47	1
When contacting privatised utilities	21	23	55	2
Out socially	42	33	24	1

source: NOP (1995: 23)

### *Language attitudes*

Limited statistical evidence on the evolution of attitudes over time is available, but we have seen in Section 2.7 that commentators generally agree that language status has improved considerably, and that this trend is correlated with more favourable attitudes. It also appears to coincide timewise with S4C's nearly fifteen years of existence. The Welsh language Board insists that "Welsh-medium and non-Welsh medium broadcasting both have tremendous potential to influence the public's attitudes and patterns of language use" (Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg, 1995: 17). It mentions encouragement and support for the broadcasting of Welsh programmes as one its responsibilities, with the added caveat that images of (minority) language use in such programmes should be positive.

The NOP Survey mentioned above includes attitudinal questions, some of them directly related to the performance of S4C (Table 10)

TABLE 10  
AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT S4C, PERCENTAGES  
(*n=802 [all respondents who watch television]*)

Statement	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Don't know	Not app.
S1	24	60	3	8	0	6	0
S2	4	29	15	15	1	36	0
S3	10	19	14	36	9	5	8
S4	3	15	12	27	5	39	0

source: NOP (1995: 50)

S1: *There should be more subtitles on S4C so that those who do not understand can watch it.*

S2: *S4C should improve the quality of Welsh language programmes.*

S3: *It is annoying to get S4C rather than UK Channel 4.*

S4: *The cost of S4C is too high given how few people watch it.*

Perhaps the most directly relevant item in the above table is respondents' judgement of the adequacy of the expenditure. Interestingly, the question was not asked whether the latter ought actually to be increased. However, we can observe that 18% agreed or strongly agreed with the claim that the amounts spent were excessive, while almost twice as many (32%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with such a judgement. Assuming that (if the relevant information on total expenditure and expenditure per capita were more widely disseminated) a comparable split would appear among respondents who don't know, we would conclude that there is more overall support in Wales for increasing, rather than reducing the expenditure on minority language broadcasting.

It is difficult to define attitudes as a function of the availability of Welsh medium television, although the raw data could serve to explore the cross-sectional relationship between more or less positive attitudes and the amount of time spent watching S4C. In relation with this latter point, perceptions of non-speakers are important; Thomas (1997: 5) observes that "Unlike radio, [television] is semi-transparent and acquires an eavesdropping audience beyond the audience for whom it is intended. People who cannot understand the language in question can still watch the screen and perceive lives not altogether unlike their own unroll in this other language, which can make it harder for the wilder prejudices and stereotypes to survive." Attitudes, which are used in a broad sense in this study, include people's direct expression of their likes and dislikes, as well as people's opinions about the relevance of the language; this latter facet of attitudes can sometimes be interpreted in terms of expectations about the future prospects of the language.

Generally, there is wide agreement in favour of the use of Welsh in Wales. 71% of respondents in the NOP Survey were supporters or strong supporters. This figure, which reaches 98% among fluent speakers, yields a very respectable rate of 54% among people who speak no Welsh at all. Only 7% of latter opposed or strongly opposed the use of Welsh. Non-speakers are mostly indifferent (39%), whereas only 2% of fluent speakers claim not to care, versus 21% of speakers with "a bit" of Welsh.

As regards respondents' view of the prospects of Welsh, we wish to quote extensively from the relevant passages of the NOP survey: "Just over half of the total sample (53%) thought that the Welsh language had a future across Wales in general, while 36% said that it was dying or already dead [...]. Optimism was higher among the middle class respondents (60%) than in working class homes (49%). Among fluent speakers, 77% expressed optimism although 15% thought that the language was dead/dying. A majority (56%) of respondents with children aged under 16 were optimistic about the future of Welsh across Wales in general. Optimism is not so apparent at a local level-only 41% thought that the language had a future "around here", while 50% classified it as being dead or dying in their area [...]. The explanation of the difference between national optimism and local pessimism is in the attitudes of people who live away from the main Welsh-speaking heartland." Generally, people living in the heartland are more optimistic about the future of the language in their area than nationally, while the reverse is true of those living in the more urbanised (and heavily anglicised) South West, who also make up a larger share of the overall sample once appropriate demolinguistic weights have been factored in.

TABLE 11  
 AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT WELSH AND ITS RELEVANCE,  
 PERCENTAGES  
 (n=815 [total sample])

Statement	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Don't know
S1	8	37	12	37	3	3
S2	21	56	7	13	1	2
S3	32	56	6	5	3	1
S4	19	44	8	16	1	11
S5	14	61	7	15	2	2
S6	15	57	6	18	1	3
S7	8	50	9	24	5	4
S8	20	63	5	10	1	1
S9	18	56	5	10	1	1

*similar question from 1989 survey, n=1062*

S8	64	25	3	3	4	1
S9	56	27	4	6	5	1

*sources: NOP (1995: 16) for top panel and Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg (1991: 64-65) for bottom panel*

*S1: Relevant to modern life.*

*S2: An asset to Wales*

*S3: Something to be proud of*

*S4: Hard to learn*

*S5: Welsh and English should have equal status*

*S6: The Welsh language increases the sense that Wales is a separate country.*

*S7: The Welsh language can be awkward socially.*

*S8: In Wales education through the Welsh language should be available at all levels from nursery school to university*

*S9: All public bodies should be able to deal with people in both Welsh and English*

The percentage of respondents who consider Welsh not relevant to modern life, at 40%, is not much below the share of those who hold the opposite view (45%). However, it is interesting to note that an overwhelming 77% consider the language to be an asset to Wales, and 88% consider it something to be proud of, while 63% agree, some strongly, that Welsh and English should enjoy equal status.

Lack of comparable data over time makes it difficult to assess how attitudes have evolved over time. The survey carried by NOP in 1989 on behalf of HTV already reports considerable support on favour of the language (Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg, 1991: 64-67), and the limited comparison provided in Table 2.12 indicates that attitudes have shifted somewhat, giving more weight to middle-of-the road positions. Generally, however, the

agree/disagree split has remained constant; the shift from “strongly agree” to “agree” opinions on statements 8 and 9 above may reflect-apart from possible changes in sampling and polling techniques-the more relaxed views that normally go along with a process of normalisation, in the Catalan sense of *normalització*. It is unlikely that support for the language would have been negatively affected by the establishment of S4C. More generally, as noted earlier, observers agree that the provision of minority language television can go a long way to alter the image of a language. In our view, apart from general improvement in attitudes, its strategic importance lies in its capacity to equip the minority language with a whole new set of associations, namely, with modernity, in addition to (not instead of) tradition.

*A specific reflection of attitudes: the success of Welsh-medium education*

As noted previously, one key strategic aspect of minority language broadcasting is that it can make a significant impact on the language behaviour of younger speakers, and S4C sets great store by offering attractive children’s programmes. This must be put in relation with another important aspect of children’s life, namely, school-going, and the linguistic dimension of this activity. Attending a Welsh-medium school provides and/or increases competence in the minority language, and hence enhances the effectiveness of minority language television. Conversely, minority language programming increases the perceived relevance of minority language instruction provided in schools. Therefore, it is interesting to say a few words about the supply of, and enrolment in Welsh-medium education, because it is not just a source, but also a reflection of the evolution of a linguistic environment in which television plays a unique role.

In addition, some sense of temporal evolution can be derived from figures covering successive years since the establishment of S4C. Obviously, such information only bears indirect relevance to the question at hand, but we believe that these data usefully contribute to the picture of a linguistic environment which shapes, and is shaped by, the development of minority language broadcasting.

Welsh-medium education concerns a steadily increasing number of pupils. Packer and Campbell (n.d.) report the following trends (Table 12) out of a total of primary schools that, owing to the concentration of pupils into establishments “where Welsh is the sole or main medium of instruction of first and second language pupils”, declined from 1,847 to 1,704 over the period considered:

TABLE 12  
EVOLUTION OF PRIMARY SECTOR IN WALES, 1982-1990

Year	No. of Welsh-speaking junior schools*	Welsh-speaking junior schools as % of total
1982	348	18.8
1983	343	18.8
1984	338	18.8
1985	355	20.0
1987	358	20.3
1988	363	20.7
1989	368	21.1
1990	417	24.1
1991	445	25.9
1993	445	26.1

\*. *more than half of the foundation subjects taught wholly or partly in Welsh.*

Over the same period, the concentration movement brought on a sharp decline in the number of schools “with some teaching in Welsh” (i.e., with a lower presence of Welsh than in schools referred to in the table above), but the evolution is a difficult one to trace, owing to changes in the presentation of the data in 1987 and in 1993. At the same time, there was a decrease of 143 units in the total number of schools in the primary English-medium sector in Wales.

Progress in the secondary education sector is more difficult to assess, and it would be delicate to infer it from raw data on schools defined according to their designation, because of the heterogeneity of curricula offered. Packer and Campbell (n.d.) discuss a variety of figures that can be interpreted as indicators of the success of Welsh-medium secondary education, showing that none, however, provides conclusive or unqualified proof of such success. They also note that the choice of bilingual education does not simply reflect language trends themselves. However, they are not divorced from them either, and stepping back for a more qualitative appraisal at recent trends, they agree (p. 4) with Baker’s view that increasing enrolments in Welsh-medium education reflect “the general growth of consciousness about the virtues of preserving the indigenous language and culture-at another level, the growth of such consciousness requires explanation in political, sociological, economic and psychological terms.”

Parental motivation for sending children to Welsh-medium schools has been the object of a good deal of interest, mostly when it was found that (with differences between counties) a significant percentage of parents were non-Welsh speaking themselves. The good reputation of Welsh-medium establishments has sometimes made headlines and been held up as a key explanatory factor<sup>19</sup>, but it should not obscure other factors listed by Packer and Campbell, such as “a natural reflection of family culture”, “a special

<sup>19</sup> E.g. in *The Economist*, August 6, 1983, and May 16, 1992. Interestingly, this publication seems to be having a rather hard time coming to terms with minority language revitalisation, often opting for a derogative or patronising tone (for example, in the second of the articles mentioned above, Welsh is described as “the local argot”).

opportunity to learn the language”, “future advantages for their children” (which may, of course, be related to school reputation), or “career and personal advantages”. Generally, the element of conscious motivation seems to be a very important one in parents’ decision to send their children to Welsh-medium schools.

In one of several studies related to various aspects of the performance of Welsh schools, Lyon and Ellis (1991) polled a small sample (final n=384) of young parents in Môn/Anglesey (North Wales) on their attitudes towards Welsh and Welsh-medium education for their children. Table 13 below reports their reasons for wanting (or not wanting) their children to learn Welsh:

TABLE 13  
PARENTAL REASONS FOR WANTING THEIR CHILDREN TO LEARN WELSH OR NOT  
1988/89, PERCENTAGES

MOTIVATION	WW	WM	WF	MM	EE	ALL GROUPS
It is an advantage	4	17	19	20	20	17
Better job prospects	3	8	11	22	18	14
Good for communication	8	0	14	16	19	14
No reason	12	25	22	12	8	14
Keep back the English	4	3	0	0	0	1
Irrelevant or unnecessary	0	8	3	6	26	10
Welsh identity and heritage	68	39	31	24	8	29
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>132</i>	<i>384</i>

*WW=Welsh couples; WM=Welsh mother and English father; WF=Welsh father and English mother; EE=English couples; MM=mixed couples (both partners with mixed language background).*

Lyons and Ellis note that overall, 86% of parents wanted their children to learn Welsh or be fluent speakers of the language. These results suggest that parental attitudes reflect a dynamic reading of language status, and hence are connected with actors’ expectations. The latter are directly influenced by media messages, or possibly by the form of the message itself-as McLuhan observed in a memorable phrase, “the medium is the message”.

#### *Numbers of speakers*

In the preceding chapter, we have already provided figures about the number of speakers, and stressed the following key points:

- ✧ the decline in the absolute numbers of speakers has been slowed down, and may soon be reversed;
- ✧ the same is true of the relative number of speakers;



- ✧ by contrast, the absolute and relative number of speakers in the younger age cohorts is on the increase.

In principle, our question should now be whether and how these trends are linked to the provision of minority language broadcasting. Although the data are insufficient to assess this point, it is interesting to consider aggregate figures. Table 14 reports the evolution of both series (that is, absolute and relative figures) by age group.

TABLE 14  
POPULATION AGED 3 AND OVER ABLE TO SPEAK WELSH, 1921-1991  
*absolute numbers (thousands) and percentages*

	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
all 3+	922.1 37.1	909.3 36.8	714.7 28.9	656.0 26.0	524.4 20.8	508.2 18.9	500.0 18.5
3-4	25.5 26.7	18.5 22.1	13.7 14.5	10.5 13.1	9.7 11.3	8.4 13.3	12.0 16.1
5-9	79.8 29.4	64.7 26.6	38.4 20.1	32.4 16.8	32.6 14.5	33.6 17.8	44.6 24.7
10-14	88.1 32.2	73.7 30.4	39.6 22.2	42.8 19.5	35.2 17.0	41.9 18.5	47.1 26.9
15-24	164.4 34.5	146.4 33.4	77.0 22.8	71.5 20.8	61.5 15.9	63.8 14.9	66.2 17.1
25-44	280.3 36.9	280.6 37.4	207.2 27.4	158.7 23.2	116.9 18.3	110.8 15.5	111.4 14.5
45-64	212.5 44.9	238.1 44.1	224.1 35.4	221.9 32.6	169.1 24.8	132.6 20.7	109.0 17.3
65+	71.5 51.9	87.3 49.9	114.6 40.7	118.3 37.2	117.4 31.0	117.0 27.4	109.7 22.6

*Source: Government Statistical Office (1994: 3).*

The shaded areas in Table 14 cover the time periods and cohorts where an increase in the absolute or relative number of speakers can be observed. Abstracting from the older age groups in the 20s, increases concern the younger age brackets over the past 30 years. Clearly, signs of a turnaround in language shift appear before S4C first went on the air in 1982, and the more direct determinant of this turnaround is very probably the increase in the supply of Welsh-medium education (C. Williams, 1991a). Much more precise and disaggregated data would be necessary to assess whether the provision of minority language television has prompted some adults to learn the language or to send their children to Welsh-medium schools; possibly, the existence of S4C may have enticed children to put more effort into taking Welsh classes, or to ask their parents to be sent to a Welsh school.

Nevertheless, Gruffudd and Morgan (1997: 306) state that “what is achieved [in terms of language revitalisation] is largely due to the influence of various pressure groups [...] and of the bodies that have been created as a result of this pressure [...] S4C [is] among [the] bodies which operate fairly independently in our haphazard language planning culture”. The actual effect of S4C itself on the number of speakers, however, can only be conjectured, and S4C’s main impact is likely to concern patterns of language use, which have been discussed earlier.

### *Competence level of speakers*

The success of Welsh revitalisation policy is not an unqualified one, and the competence level of speakers can be a good indicator of such limitations. Though 18% of the Welsh population considers itself fluent in the language, an additional 3% said that they had been fluent but had lost some or most of their language skills after leaving school. Another indicator of weaknesses on this level is the finding (Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg, 1995) that speakers’ confidence in their language skills are high at home, for shopping, and for socialising, but lower in more formal settings such as dealings with local councils or local utility companies.

By providing examples of language usage, radio and television offer unique opportunities to expose speakers to a variety of language registers, as well as an efficient way to disseminate unfamiliar terms or neologisms (Thomas, 1995; Awbery, 1995). This latter point is not without importance, since there is a common tendency among most minority languages to borrow heavily from the lexicon (or other linguistic features) of the associated dominant language, not just for rare terms or for words denoting recent technological innovations, but also in cases where the minority language either has a perfectly appropriate term of its own, or provides lexical elements out of which an adequate new term could be coined<sup>20</sup>. Awbery (1995) notes that S4C has made an important contribution in ensuring that new terms (derived from Latin and Greek) become widely known and accepted, in lieu of loan words from English.

Tensions, however, are not confined to the relationship between Welsh and English, and also have to do with the proper role of formal and informal Welsh. Conflict is internal to the community of Welsh-speakers, in which Awbery (1995: 84) points out the existence of a “strong purist element [...] and, associated with it, the belief that only formal Welsh is good Welsh.” Many people with relatively lower levels of education, however, feel more at ease with colloquial registers. It is S4C policy to try and satisfy both types of audiences, and to embrace the variety of regional Welsh accents as well as local lexical variants.

Although common sense suggests that S4C can only have improved the competence level of speakers (by inducing a shift to the right of the overall distribution of competence

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<sup>20</sup> The broadening of language competence, however, is probably not confined to neologisms; while there is evidence that use of Welsh in the home (possibly in connection with TV watching) is related to a better command of grammar (the case in point being the mutation system that characterises the beginning of Welsh words depending on their grammatical position), the effect of TV watching proper appears to be inconclusive. The authors thank Glyn Williams for this information.

levels), we have not been able to locate statistical evidence that could demonstrate this relationship. What would be required to this end is a large-scale data set with information on individual language skills and S4C viewing time, along with an extensive range of control variables (schooling, parents' education, region of residence, language characteristics of social network, patterns of language use at home and at work, etc.). This would allow a cross-sectional study of the net contribution of viewing time to competence levels, but would only offer indirect evidence of the effectiveness of minority language television for any given individual; panel data comparing the same individuals over successive periods would be necessary.

### *Limitations*

There can be no doubt that S4C has made, and keeps making, a considerable contribution to the revitalisation of Welsh. However, this conclusion is subject to two types of limitations, some methodological, some dealing with the issue of the effectiveness of S4C proper.

As regards the first type of limitation, we have noted that for the most part, we have had to rely on more or less circumstantial evidence. On the one hand, the precise cause-and-effect relationships that could link the provision of minority language television to revitalisation are not fully clarified, even on theoretical grounds. For example, despite the fact that (for reasons explained earlier) S4C has had to acquire early on the habit of commissioning its own programmes, there is little in the way of theoretical models about the long-term language effects, on language use and revitalisation, of the type of cultural references and messages relayed by television programmes. At an empirical level, lack of data implies that only indirect effects can be documented.

As a result of these methodological limitations, it is difficult to conclude as to the actual effects of S4C on the fortunes of Welsh. Gruffudd (1996) notes that Welsh language programmes must avoid creating a picture of an ageing culture, and favour content appealing to the young, but that this is no easy goal. In his sample (about which no information is provided), only 10% of young people could name a programme providing Welsh rock music, and only 5% a programme of Welsh light entertainment. Respondents sometimes deride these shows as pale and unconvincing imitations of Anglo-American pop. This does not necessarily imply that such programmes are useless, and may, rather, be an indicator of the strength of positive or negative mental associations between certain languages and particular forms of entertainment. Perhaps more time and experimentation is necessary until Welsh-language rock music is perceived as genuine.

One other area of concern for the future of the revitalisation of Welsh is the contraction of traditional strongholds of the language, for example in Gwynedd, where the demolinguistic dominance of Welsh is still undergoing erosion. While the provision of minority language television programming apparently gives a significant boost to the language throughout Wales, and hence makes more of a difference in heavily anglicised areas, it is impossible, at this time, to say whether it can contribute to stemming the decline of the language in "Welsh Wales".

This last point raises the problem of the need for more or less homogeneous minority language territories for language maintenance. For now, suffice it to say that evidence on this point is mixed, and the debate over it often acrimonious. In our view, the existence of geolinguistic strongholds, possibly enshrined in legislation, is more likely to be beneficial than detrimental to minority language maintenance, but is not a necessary or sufficient condition for the success of revitalisation policies. However, in cases where such territories are profoundly eroded or no longer exist, language planners will have to make do without them, which reinforces the need for non-territorially based supporting systems of minority language promotion such as television.

### 3.8 Evaluation

Although the information available is mostly of a circumstantial nature, there can be little doubt that the establishment of S4C and the availability of Welsh-language broadcasting has:

- ✧ considerably increased the amount of time that Welsh-speakers can devote to television watching in their language;
- ✧ considerably increased the range, status and practice of a major leisure activity in Welsh;
- ✧ given the Welsh language a much more dynamic image;
- ✧ generally increased the sense of relevance of Welsh in modern life.

Effects on the attitudes and expectations of speakers and non-speakers, on their patterns of language use in activities other than television watching, on the number of speakers and on the latter's level of proficiency in the language can be safely assumed to be, in the aggregate, positive, or undoubtedly non-negative. While there is significant room for improvement in the efficiency of S4C as a language planning instrument, particularly as regards its appeal to teenage audiences, it would be hard not to conclude that S4C is a key element, if not a cornerstone in the revitalisation of Welsh.

Of chief interest to us in this study, however, is some sense of the conditions that have allowed S4C to be a language planning success, which is not quite the same as asking what makes it a good television channel, although its quality obviously contributes to its success as a language planning instrument. We have identified seven major reasons explaining this success.

- ✧ First, the historical circumstances surrounding its creation make it clear that there was significant pent-up demand for a Welsh-language channel, and that what little Welsh was provided on English-medium television was inadequate. The subsequent success of S4C once on the air is in part due to the fact that, apart from the existence of an audience potential made up of the total pool of speakers, a significant number of them were explicitly interested in watching television in their language.
- ✧ Second, S4C has skilfully tailored its output to the needs of the audience. This implies, on the one hand, a commitment to quality, made necessary by the very stiff competition faced by the channel. On the other hand, relevance to the interests and concerns of the audience was ensured by the important role of original creation; we

have seen earlier why S4C could not be content with dubbed reruns of American or English productions.

- ✧ Third, despite its close attention to the preferences of the audience, S4C has consistently devoted part of its programming to experiments with new products; this gives the channel a modern, possibly challenging image, that preserves it from being perceived as rehashing worn out content with little relevance to modern life.
- ✧ Fourth, S4C has obviously benefited from a convergence between its purposes and a more general *Zeitgeist*. The latter can be observed on the cultural, political, economic and technological levels. All were conducive to the setting up of more varied and independent broadcasters-notably the concept of distributing as opposed to producing channels, and the notion that diversity, linguistic, cultural or otherwise, can generate commercial as well as non-commercial value.
- ✧ Fifth, there had to be a willingness from the authorities to endorse and financially support the project. We have seen that distinct pressure had to be exerted on the Thatcher government until the latter agreed to the creation of S4C and, most importantly, to allow 3.2% of total television revenues to be devoted to S4C's mission; in other words, although such willingness was not forthcoming, thereby jeopardising supply, pressure from the demand side finally caused supply to follow. In this case, given the cost structure of television broadcasting (particularly one that stresses quality, or one that targets minority audiences), the interaction of supply and demand had to be mediated by the political process instead of being exclusively played out on the market.

With hindsight, the success of S4C and the wide recognition of its usefulness and legitimacy can also be explained by two additional factors.

- ✧ The sixth factor simply is the natural consequence of a normalisation process. S4C is now an accepted part of the broadcasting landscape, and something would be missing in its absence. It seems prudent to remember that recognition is never won for ever, which implies that continuing efforts to maintain quality and relevance are always necessary; nevertheless, such efforts do not start out from nothing, and can build on the achievements, whether in terms of reputation or ratings, realised to date.
- ✧ The seventh factor reflects a general perception of induced positive effects resulting from the existence of a Welsh-medium channel. We have already pointed to the estimated 3,000 jobs created, in addition to the 140 directly employed by S4C, and the channel's contribution to Welsh identity and "sense of place". If the channel had been established without the remit to provide peak-hours Welsh programming, some jobs would certainly have been created too, but such job creation would undoubtedly have taken place elsewhere, and such jobs would not have implied the use of Welsh or the development of various skills in Welsh. The development of local expertise in broadcasting, film-making, animation, acting, etc. means that talent can develop locally and in the language. In other words, the establishment of S4C allows Wales to export animation films and drama series, generating revenue at the same time, instead of losing talented individuals to foreign (and non-Welsh-speaking) competition.

## 4. LANGUAGE EDUCATION PLANNING IN EUSKADI

### *4.1 Background on Euskera*

Straddling the border between France and Spain on the Atlantic ocean, the Basque Country (Euskal Herria) has a population of approximately 3 million, including 600,000 speakers of Basque (Euskaldunes). Of this number, 500,000 live in Spain. The term “Basque Country” refers to all the provinces of Euskal Herria, whether in France or in Spain. Euskal Herria is conventionally divided into seven provinces. The three provinces on the French side of the border (Zuberoa, Lapurdi and Behe-Nafarroa) are collectively referred to as Iparralde or North Basque Country. Of the four provinces on the Spanish side, three (Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa and Araba) make up the Basque Autonomous Community, often referred to in the literature as the C.A.V. (Comunidad Autonoma Vasca), while the last one, Navarra, has a distinct constitutional status in the Spanish state under the name of Comunidad Foral de Navarra. The commonly used term “Euskadi” refers to the three provinces of the Basque Autonomous Community—or C.A.V.. It is very often the case that mentions of the “Basque Country”, particularly in the language planning literature, actually mean “Euskadi”. In this report, we also focus on Euskadi because it represents a relevant unit of analysis with a clearly identified education policy.

The Basque language, or Euskera, is the only indigenous non-Indo-European language in Western Europe. In this report, we use the term “Euskera”, although the variants “Euskara” and, more rarely, “Eskuara” are also found in the literature. Several hypotheses have been entertained about its origins, and although Euskera displays structural similarities with some Caucasian languages like Georgian, no relationship has been proved conclusively, and it is generally considered an isolated language. According to the 1883 Language Charter granted by Prince Luis Luciano Bonaparte, there are eight variants of Euskera, one of which is now extinct. Because this diversity can be an obstacle to communication between different parts of Euskal Herria, the Euskaltzaindia (Academy of the Basque Language) was commissioned in 1968 to create a unified standard. The work of Euskaltzaindia resulted in the creation of *Euskera batua* (from “bat”, “one”), which is now used by most media, in literature and in schools.

The emergence of Basque as a written language is comparatively recent (the first book in Euskera was published in 1545) and the language faced formidable competition from two major languages (Spanish and French), but Euskera has survived to the present day thanks to its rich oral tradition rooted in pastoral poetry and *bertsolari* contests (lyrical or satirical poetry improvisations). The survival and development of Basque into the 20th century are all the more remarkable that during the 36 years of fascist dictatorship in Spain and the associated centralisation, the use of Euskera in public was banned, and speakers managed to pass on the language despite the threat of imprisonment. Nonetheless, language maintenance was under pressure, and had to face the additional

challenge of strong Spanish-speaking immigration into the more industrialised and prosperous Basque provinces.

It was not until after Franco's death in 1975 that the new Spanish government granted the three provinces of Euskadi a statute of autonomy (1978), providing the basis for the recognition of Euskera as an official language. Section 6 of the 1979 Statute of Autonomy of Euskadi, which defines the nature of relations between the central government in Madrid and the government of the C.A.V., stipulates that "Euskera, together with Castilian, is the official language of Euskadi, and all its inhabitants have the right to know and use both languages. [...] No one can be discriminated for reasons of language".

On November 14, 1982, the Parliament of Euskadi adopted the *Basic Law of the Standardisation of the Basque Language*, which introduced a broad range of measures aiming at defending and promoting the use of written and spoken Euskera in various domains, including the provision of state services, education, the media, etc. This piece of legislation is the starting point of a language policy resting on three pillars, namely, the administration, the media and education. It is seen as reflecting popular demand, since according to a survey commissioned in 1981 by Euskaltzaindia, 86.5% of respondents agreed with the goal of maintaining and promoting Euskera (Rotaetxe, 1985).

There are practically no unilingual Euskaldunes (Basque-speakers), since all speak Castilian, French, or both<sup>21</sup>. The distribution of Euskaldunes is uneven. In 1991, they made up 26% of the population in Euskadi, 10% in Navarra and 31% in Iparralde. In general, the percentage of Euskaldunes is higher in rural or isolated areas, although recent revitalisation efforts have had some measure of success in restoring Euskera as a language of towns and cities.

This geolinguistic heterogeneity is compounded by a sharply uneven distribution across age groups. Table 15 describes the evolution over time of the percentage of Euskaldunes by age group in Euskadi, which is home to two thirds of the population of Euskal Herria.

TABLE 15  
SHARE OF EUSKALDUNES BY AGE GROUP IN EUSKADI, 1981, 1986 AND 1991

AGE GROUP	CENSUS YEAR		
	1981	1986	1991
5-19	19%	26%	35%
20-29	19%	23%	25%
30-49	20%	21%	21%
>49	29%	28%	26%
Total	22%	25%	26%

Source: Erriondo and Isasi (1995: 346)

<sup>21</sup> Non-speakers of Basque are called *Erdaldunes*.

As shown in Table 2.15, whereas in 1981 the distribution of Euskaldunes across the three younger age groups was relatively homogeneous, a strong contrast between the youngest (5-19) and middle-age (30-49) group has emerged in just ten years. We shall see that the sharp increase in the percentage of young Euskaldunes can be credited to the school system. In short, urbanisation and rejuvenation represent the most significant changes in the demolinguistic position of Euskera in recent years.

Other observations contrast with this positive evolution. First, the share of Euskaldunes in the population of Euskadi remains, on the whole, a modest one, at some 25%, and there is no certainty that recent increases will go on. Second, the growth in the percentage of Euskaldunes has slowed down (this percentage has actually declined slightly) in some age brackets. This must be assessed in connection with the fact that between 1986 and 1991, the total population of Euskadi dropped by 1%, following a modest increase from 0.7% between 1981 and 1986 (Erriondo and Isasi, 1995). Finally, the lowest percentage of Euskaldunes, as well as the least favourable attitudes towards learning and using the language, are found in those segments of the population that can be considered most dynamic socially and economically. However, as we shall see below, this aspect appears to be currently improving.

#### ***4.2 Language education planning as language policy***

In our framework, language education is viewed as an instrument of language policy in two different ways. Both are subsumed under the general designation of “education planning”, but it should be clear that we are not concerned with education as a whole, but with the teaching of the minority language, principally—but not exclusively—through the formal education system, which is mainly in the hands of the state.

“Education planning” has been broken down in two parts, namely “skills development” and “acquisition planning”. The sense in which these terms are used here, which does not necessarily match their use by other authors, is the following: “skills development” refers to the improvement in the distribution of levels of competence in the population, while “acquisition planning” refers to the increase in the number of individuals who are able to use the language at a given level of proficiency. Skills development and acquisition planning function differently, not just in our model, but also in the way in which they alter speakers’ circumstances; for both reasons, they are kept separate in the analytical framework. However, they are almost indistinguishable when it comes to the *provision* of both measures in actual language policy contexts. Hence, they will be treated jointly in this chapter.

Nevertheless, it is important to recall why their analytical effects are not the same. Skills development increases speakers’ efficiency at using the minority language; its chief consequence is to reduce the implicit price of minority language activities. When it becomes easier to function in it, speakers will generally tend to use it more. Acquisition planning works differently: it simply increases the total number of people who can be considered speakers of the language. Obviously, the existence of speakers is a necessary condition for the language to be used, and this simple fact probably goes a long way towards explaining why education planning is the subject of the largest single line of sociolinguistic research on language planning and language revitalisation, as a glance to



any of the leading journals of the profession will quickly show. It is also a traditional favourite of language planners; unfortunately, this often goes along with inadequate attention to the conditions that make it successful. Although its focus is *not* on schools, our overview of the Irish case will give us the opportunity to mention some deficiencies of an essentially school-based approach to minority language revitalisation (Section 5.1). In the present chapter, which is devoted to education planning in Euskadi, we shall therefore take account not just of the school system itself, but of some of the surrounding support system and broader conditions that have played a significant role in ensuring that language teaching efforts have actually resulted in an increase in the percentage of speakers, particularly in the younger age groups.

The distinction between “internal” and “external” effectiveness, which we introduced in chapter 1, must be recalled here. Internal effectiveness has to do with the relationship between inputs and outputs *within* the educational sphere. For example, internal effectiveness evaluation examines whether teacher/student ratios, teacher’s experience profile, specific pedagogical approaches, or socio-economic homogeneity in the classroom have an impact on students’ performance, as measured through standardised tests. Apart from the technical estimation of such relationships, which makes up an important part of the literature in the economics of education, such questions are mostly in the province of specialists in the education sciences. By contrast, external effectiveness evaluation is concerned with the relationship between inputs and outputs *outside* the educational sphere. Inputs will often be aggregated and expressed in monetary terms, while outputs are made up of effects that can be observed in society at large, but which are seen as resulting from the performance of the education system. In the economic analysis of language education, key outcomes are wage differentials accruing to people who possess second language skills, indicators of non-market welfare gains (such as inter-group harmony), or increases in the use of the languages taught in the education system (see e.g. Grin, 1994e).

In the analysis of policies whose ultimate goal is precisely to increase the use of the target language, our concern is obviously with external efficiency evaluation, and our assessment of the Basque experience must be viewed in this light. The distinction between internal and external efficiency is not as sharp in practice as it is in theory, and a focus on a given school subject (such as a particular language) often provides a bridge between them (Grin and Sfreddo, 1997). Nevertheless, it must be remembered that this study approaches language planning as a form of public policy, and that this logically prescribes a corresponding level of analysis. Internal effectiveness issues exceed the scope of this report. However, they become relevant at a later stage of the overall language policy enterprise, when the specifics of the implementation of minority language instruction are discussed. These questions are clearly in the province of specialists in that particular field.

#### ***4.3 The development of Basque education policy in Euskadi***

The 1979 Statute of Autonomy provides the legal basis for language policy in Euskadi, but the contribution of schools to the maintenance and development of the language predates the end of the dictatorship.

The official school system had served to disseminate the language of the state (Castilian) and to confine Euskera to the position of a rural language (Rotaetxe, 1985; Agote and Azkue, 1991). Being aware of the key role of schools in language maintenance, the Basque federated in 1969 the semi-clandestine, privately run language teaching centres (*ikastolak*), which had been operating, albeit in small numbers, since the turn of the century. At the same time as they followed the official syllabus of the Spanish Ministry of Education, the *ikastolak* taught through the medium of Euskera and organised various activities conducive to the transmission of Basque culture, such as regional geography, history, song, dancing, etc. (Martínez-Arbelaiz, 1996). *Ikastolak* met the need for structures to ensure linguistic and cultural survival and became the first “language laboratories” of Euskera and in Euskera.

As soon as political conditions made it possible with the establishment of the 1979 Statute of Autonomy, a real debate developed on school structures, their role in the transmission of Euskera, and the extension of the use of the language to all domains—the process referred to as “normalisation”. This debate raised the following key issue: how to reconcile a social fabric made up of Basque-Castilian bilinguals and Castilian unilinguals and an official school system designed strictly for the teaching of Castilian and in Castilian? Or, more precisely, how to mesh the interests of those in favour of an alternative system of purely Basque-language schools and those advocating language transmission through non-compulsory Euskera classes in mainstream education?

In answer to these questions, the 1979 reform of the state education system resulted in the creation of the current system, now governed by the 1983 decree on bilingualism. The system is based on the coexistence of four types of schooling, or “models”.

- ✧ Model A: teaching of all subjects takes place in Castilian and Euskera is taught as a subject;
- ✧ Model B: teaching takes place in both official languages; the share of each language varies between schools;
- ✧ Model D: teaching of all subjects takes place in Euskera and Castilian is taught as a subject. This model, which is the symmetrical counterpart of model A, is closest to that of the *ikastolas*.
- ✧ Model X: teaching takes place in Castilian and Euskera is not taught.

The prerequisite of *euskaldunisation* (“basquisition”) through schools was the training of teachers and the setting up of adult language classes for non-Euskera-speaking parents of children going to *ikastolas* or model D schools. To this end, several programmes and structures were initiated: the IRALE programme (1980) for the alphabetisation and basquisition of teachers; the HABE institute (1981) for the alphabetisation and rebasquisition of adults; and the EIMA programme (1982) for the development of Basque teaching materials.<sup>22</sup>

On the legal plane, the teaching of Euskera through the school system is guaranteed by Sections 15 through 21 of the Act of 24 November 1982. This Act grants all pupils the

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<sup>22</sup> Most of the time, only acronyms (instead of the full Basque name) of the programmes are used, also in official documents, and we conform to this practice.

right to be schooled through the medium of Euskera or Castilian and includes several measures whose goal is to ensure that during their years of compulsory schooling, students develop an “adequate practical knowledge” of both official languages. This implies that the teaching of both official languages is a legal obligation, exemptions being possible in exceptional cases. In addition, the Act requires the authorities to take all necessary steps for the progressive generalisation of bilingualism throughout the school system in Euskadi.

Following the adoption of the Act, the *Hizkuntza Politikarako Idazkaritza Nagusia* (Secretariat for Language Policy) was created in the end of 1982 to co-ordinate all language planning activities. Its name was changed to *Hizkuntza Politikarako Sailordetza* (Deputy Ministry for Language Policy) in the 1991 administrative reform. 1987 saw the creation of the Basque Language Advisory Board, which then published a reference document on the “Basic Criteria for the Basque Language.

In 1990, the legislation on the normalisation of Euskera in schools was completed with a law on the general structure of the education system. One of the goals pursued by this law is to develop students’ ability to understand and express themselves correctly in Spanish and in Euskera. This principle is also mentioned explicitly in Act 1/1993 of 19 February on the Basque public school, which regulates the combination of two networks (public and private) and requires *ikastolas* to choose between integration into the public education system or continued autonomy as private institutions (Departamento de Cultura, 1997).

In the same year, Act 2/1993 on Teachers in the non-university sector was also adopted. It stipulates that “work relations in the education sector will necessarily establish the linguistic profile of each post” (Departamento de Cultura, 1997). The Decree based on this Act established criteria for the definition of these profiles and the compulsory deadlines for acquiring them.

Finally, the General Plan for the Revitalisation of Euskera was adopted in 1995. It defines the language policy strategy to follow in the coming years, given the new sociolinguistic context that has emerged as a result of the implementation of 1982 Act.

#### **4.4 Agencies responsible**

Public schools fall within the province of the Department of Education. In accordance with the legislative apparatus described in the preceding section, the Department runs the A, B, D and X models of education. It should be noted that different models can coexist on the same school premises, and that analysing the education system in terms of schools may or may not allow interpretations in terms of the four models. The X model has progressively been phased out and now only exists in exceptional cases.

Alongside the public education system, some *ikastolas* have chosen to remain independent institutions.

Finally, language planning bodies provide a support system for euskaldunisation through the school system proper. The three main actors are the following:

The Deputy Ministry for Language Policy is in charge of language policy matters. It is part of the Department of Culture, includes three departments and is entrusted with the following tasks: (i) promotion of Euskera in all areas of social life; (ii) sociolinguistic studies, information and publications; (iii) normalisation of Euskera in public administration and planification of normalisation measures. This latter unit is also entrusted with the co-ordination of teacher training programmes (see Section 4.5 below).

The HABE (Institute for Adult Literacy and Basquisition) is placed under the responsibility of the Department of Culture and works in close collaboration with the Deputy Ministry for Language Policy. It is in charge of the teaching of Basque to adults in the *euskaltegis*, where Euskera language classes are offered throughout the year. *Euskaltegis* also play a key role in the euskaldunisation of teachers.

The Basque Language Advisory Board functions as a forum that brings together representatives of the main bodies involved, in some capacity or other, in the normalisation process. It is entrusted with the supervision and evaluation of progress made in the implementation of the General Plan of Normalisation of Euskera.

#### **4.5 The operation of language education<sup>23</sup>**

Before presenting the ways in which the revitalisation of Euskera takes place in the school system of Euskadi, we wish to remind the reader that this study is not, and is not meant to be, a specialist review of educational or language teaching practices. Reference is made in the text to several publications where these questions are addressed; however, it is important to remember that this study pursues different goals. Our main concern is with the evaluation of policy in terms of outcomes, and the level of generality aimed at (in order to provide an integrative overview of different types of policy experience) means that some aspects of the language teaching and language learning processes, though interesting in themselves, are not relevant here. They would, however, be highly relevant when moving from the “large-scale” level of analysis chosen here to the “smaller scale” issues of language instruction in the classroom.

Two types of measures have been introduced for the revitalisation of Euskera through the school system:

- ✧ Measures directly affecting the school system: diversification of school models; teacher training; production of teaching materials; extension of bilingual teaching to universities; subsidies to private language teaching centres.
- ✧ Measures affecting the milieu outside the school system proper: organisation of adult Euskera classes, creation of a network of boarding institutions and holiday camps, awareness campaigns targeting students and parents.

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<sup>23</sup> The information presented in this section comes from the following sources: Erriondo and Isasi (1995); Martínez-Ableaiz (1996); *Hizkuntza Politikarako Sailordetza* (1990 and various years); *Institut culturel basque* (1996); *Comisión de Instituciones e Interior* (1997).

These various measures are described below.

### *Diversification of school models*

As mentioned earlier, the school system of Euskadi currently includes four different models (A, B, D and X) defined according to the relative importance of Euskera. Of these four models, three are considered bilingual; the system as a whole is viewed as a reflection of the diglossic patterns of life in Euskadi, and to the fact that the functional distribution of language over domains is not unique but changeable between individuals and groups. Model A is meant for members of the hispanophone community, and model D for Euskaldunes. Model B is intended for hispanophones who are close to Basque language and culture. Choosing one or another model is a matter of free choice by students (or, more likely, their parents). Finally, the unilingual model X is available only for exceptional cases—for example, children of temporary residents whose native language may be neither Spanish nor Euskera.

### *Teacher training*

In the school context, the teaching workforce is the main agent of language normalisation. Its function is not confined to the transmission of technical linguistic knowledge, because the teacher generally represents learners' main or sole language reference. The IRALE programme, which has provided Basque courses for some 15,000 teachers and had an enrolment of 1,226 in 1997, therefore plays a role whose strategic importance cannot be overestimated.

The language training of teachers is integrated in a broader Euskaldunisation programme targeting the entire civil service. Language courses for teachers are taught at the euskaltegis.

According to the Act and Decree of 1993 discussed in Section 4.3, a language profile (LP) is associated with each teaching position. Each teacher must acquire the relevant language profile within a certain time. There are two linguistic profiles in the education system:

- ✧ PL1, where the teacher's knowledge of the language is sufficient for him/her to use Euskera as a means of communication, but not as a medium of instruction;
- ✧ PL2, where the teacher's knowledge of the language is sufficient for him/her to use Euskera as a means of communication and a medium of instruction; this allows the teacher to teach Euskera as well as to teach through Euskera.

It is important to note that in the Basque case, achieving a higher language profile does not give access to wage premiums or other monetary gains for teachers.

### *Production of teaching materials*

Three fourths of printed teaching materials are produced by Basque publishing houses, and the remaining fourth is produced directly by the CAV. Given the modest numbers of users and the correspondingly high unit cost of these materials, the authorities have

developed a subsidising system (the EIMA programme), which also includes some control on the linguistic and pedagogical quality of the output. In addition to printed materials, the EIMA programme subsidises audio-visual and computer-assisted teaching aids.

#### *Bilingual instruction in universities*

The University of the Basque Country has approved a plan for the introduction of Euskera in all teaching activities, along with the setting up of various committees for the implementation of this project. On average, some 40% of courses are taught through both official languages, but only 10% of students currently study in Euskera. University-level teaching through Basque, however, is important for the Euskaldunisation of future teachers in the secondary and post-secondary tiers of the school system.

#### *Adult language classes*

As part of its effort of providing access to Basque for adults, the Department of Culture is involved in the development of a network of *euskaltegis*, or Basque language centres. There are now more than 150 public (one third) or private centres (two thirds). Their activities are co-ordinated by HABE (the Institute for alphabetisation and rebasquisition of adults). During the 1993/94 school year, some 2,000 teachers have given classes to more than 43,400 adults. On average, each student has devoted 340 hours to learning the language. It is estimated that after an average of 400 hours of alphabetisation and 1,500 hours of Euskaldunisation, students have completed their training and are in the position to obtain the official EGA certificate (Certificate of capacity in Euskera).

#### *Boarding houses and holiday camps*

In 1985, a network of boarding houses was created by the Department of Education, with the aim to further the use of Euskera among students. These institutions (which are distinct from schools themselves) are open throughout the school year and give young people coming from a mostly hispanophone environment the opportunity to live in Euskaldun surroundings and to use Euskera. On average, some 3,000 students per year avail themselves of this opportunity. Stays usually last one to two weeks.

#### *Awareness campaigns*

Ikastolas as well as various non-school associations organise a number of activities that lie outside the education sphere but whose goal is clearly language-related. These activities are supervised by the Department of Culture, and their emphasis is on the maintenance and development of Basque culture. As such, they carry on the clandestine work of the *ikastolak* during the years of the dictatorship.

Among the various campaigns, let us mention the particularly significant *Ahoz aho, belanez belan* ("By word of mouth, from generation to generation"), which stresses the importance of passing on the language to the next generation (and, interestingly, converges with Fishman's (1991) insistence on the crucial role of intergenerational transmission). A travelling exhibit shows visitors (mostly schoolchildren and their

parents) how and why schools and the family can be the most effective tools for *ensuring* the continued use of Euskera. This campaign also attempts to build bridges between the teaching of Euskera at school and its transmission in the family.

#### *Subsidisation*

Direct subsidies are available for *ikastolak* and other private language teaching centres such as the *euskaltegis*.

#### **4.6 Costs**

Ideally, an estimate of the cost of the education side of a language policy should rest on figures on expenditure per student in the different models A, B, D and X; Comparison of the former three with the latter would then yield direct estimates of the cost of teaching Basque as a subject, of teaching Basque through partial immersion, and of teaching through the medium of Basque instead of Castilian. The cost of adult Euskaldunisation and additional support programmes could then be added to provide an estimate of the aggregate cost of the language education policy.

Unfortunately, such figures do not exist; since the various models operate in parallel and can be found in the same schools, there is no accounting by model. More generally, the development of education accounting is a demanding challenge that governments are beginning to face through international programmes managed by the OECD (such as the INES programme—see e.g. OECD, 1993). However, even such efforts fall short of the needs of goal-oriented evaluations. For example, expenditures are categorised according to their economic nature (e.g., investment costs versus teachers' wages) or the tiers of education systems, but not according to the type of skills taught. Recent work on subject-based expenditure accounting (Grin and Sfreddo, 1997) provides a methodology for the estimation of public spending on specific subjects such as second languages, but application of this rather involved method would be impossible in the context of this study.

Our estimation procedure for the Basque case includes the following steps.

- (i) identification of the type of expenditure for which some data are available, and which can be interpreted as an additional cost in comparison with a non-Euskaldun education system;
- (ii) estimation of the amounts concerned;
- (iii) estimation of the total number of students schooled wholly or partly in Euskera;
- (iv) estimation of several ratios such as expenditure per student, expenditure per bilingual student, etc.

It is important not to confuse the cost of education with the marginal cost of operating an Euskaldun education system. The reason for this is a simple one: children have to be schooled anyway, and what matters here is the *additional* expenditure resulting from teaching in Euskera and through Euskera, instead of operating the system in Spanish only. If teacher-pupil ratios are identical in the various models, and if teachers of Euskera or through Euskera command the same wage rate, then expenditure per student is not part

of the cost of the policy. Relevant items of expenditure therefore include the following yearly figures:

- (i) Public spending on the euskaldunisation of teachers in the IRALE programme. For the current year, it stands at 5.039.231.702 Pts<sup>24</sup>. Adopting a rate of exchange of 1000:9.225, this is equivalent to a little under EUR 20.947m. It must be pointed out, however, that this is a temporary kind of spending, insofar as Euskera-speaking teachers will ultimately be produced normally by the Basque teacher training system.
- (ii) Share of subsidies to the ikastolas covering the extra costs associated with the fact that ikastolas function in Basque instead of Castilian. No information was available on this question; however, as indicated above, there would have been a cost for the schooling of children through Castilian anyway, so that the marginal operative cost is probably low; pending further information, we have chosen to ignore this amount.
- (iii) Costs accruing in the production of Basque teaching materials (under the EIMA programme). These costs, in 1997, amounted to Pts 228.4m, that is, some EUR 949,152.
- (iv) Overhead accruing in the running of bilingual (as opposed to unilingual) school institutions, along with a fraction of the operating budget of the Deputy Ministry for Language Policy reflecting its involvement in language education planning. Since figures on these items are not available, we have substituted for them the yearly budget of the NOLEGA (Normalizazio Legearen Garapena) programme, whose aim is the implementation of the Law of Normalisation. Its budget for 1997 amounted to 279.880.000 Pts, that is, some EUR 1,163,400. Using the NOLEGA budget provides an upper-bound estimate of the educational costs that have to be estimated, since this budget includes the running of five Barnategis, that is, language resource centres that operate as facilitators on issues that are not limited to education proper.

Summing the figures above, we obtain a total cost of teaching Basque and through Basque in the education system—as opposed to not teaching it—of approximately EUR 23.060m. The cost of various non-school activities whose aim is clearly to complement in-school language instruction could arguably be added to this figure. However, we have not been able to recover information about this expenditure. In order to allow for the latter (as well as to approximate the relevant share of subsidies to the *ikastolak* mentioned as item (ii) above), we decided to add 5% to the figure just estimated, that is, EUR 1,153,000, which brings the total cost of teaching Basque and through Basque at some EUR 24.213m per year.

At the best of times, evaluating the real expenditure of an education system is a thankless task; furthermore, using the resulting estimates in a cost-effectiveness exercise raises considerable conceptual problems, which can be solved in theory, but hardly ever in practice, because the data available are usually much less detailed than those necessary to

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<sup>24</sup> As before, the amounts standardised in New Zealand dollars in the original study were converted to Euros using the rate of exchange between the NZD and the EUR prevailing on the date of the introduction of the Euro, namely 1:0.4506 NZD/EUR.



provide the empirical counterpart of a reasonably satisfactory conceptual approach. This is the case here, despite the extensive information on the Basque education system provided by our informants.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the following paragraphs are only a rough approximation of cost-effectiveness, which we develop in the conviction that some approximation is preferable to none at all.

The cost-effectiveness of the system can be evaluated in terms of the expenditure required to produce a speaker of Basque. In our case, a “speaker of Basque” must have a level of proficiency that allows him to consider himself bilingual in terms of the analytical model sketched out in Chapter 1. This means that any difference between the shadow price of performing a certain activity in Castilian or in Basque cannot be explained by higher proficiency in Castilian than in Basque, and is entirely due to the “supply-side factors of the linguistic environment” (see Fig. 1, Chapter 1), or to a different unit market price of the goods and services necessary to perform activities in one or another language. In reality, this “theoretical bilingual” can be represented by a person who is, in general, comfortable with using Basque and therefore has a real choice not to carry out his activities in Spanish.

This raises not just the issue of the number of people who can be considered bilingual, but also the problem of estimating who becomes bilingual through the Basque education system. We shall assume that students schooled through models B and D become bilingual, while students in model A do not. This assumption is borne out by circumstantial evidence suggesting that the level of proficiency in Basque achieved by students schooled in model A is low. If we further assume that total student enrolment (across all tiers of the education system) remains stable, then the number of students acquiring the quality of bilinguals, in any given year, is the sum of those enrolled in models B and D; this total is of 182,110 (see Table 17). However, this figure has to be corrected downwards, because a certain percentage of students from Basque-speaking homes would presumably have become fluent anyway, even if schooled in an exclusively Castilian-speaking system. The figures reported in the first column of Table 15 indicate that in 1981, 20% of those in the 30-49 age group and 19% of those in the 20-29 age group were Euskaldunes, although they have not been schooled through Basque (some of them, however, presumably attended the then clandestine *ikastolas*). The percentage of Euskaldunes in the 5-19 age group (some of whom may have been schooled partly in Basque, and most of whom have not been confronted with overt language repression), is remarkably similar at 19%. If, as seems likely, children from Euskaldun homes are normally sent to the B and D streams, then we can assume that 20% of them would have been bilinguals anyway, so that only 80% of the enrolment in the B and D models can be credited to language education policy. Therefore, the total number of students becoming bilingual as a result of language education policy is, very conservatively, estimated at 145,688. Expenditure per head—in terms of “successful” basquisition—is then a little above EUR 166 per year.

Account must also be taken of the fact that students spend many years in the education system, and that each successive year can be assumed necessary to achieve adequate competence in Euskera. Up to and including compulsory secondary education, and

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<sup>25</sup> The authors are particularly indebted to JoseAn Urdangarin Arrizabalaga and Mikel Zalbide Elustondo.

including only children from the age of three, schooling in the Basque system lasts 13 years (the first three being non-compulsory pre-school years).<sup>26</sup> The resulting “unit cost” to the school system of “producing” a bilingual can therefore be estimated at some EUR 2,162. This estimate is probably on the high side, because we have systematically opted for the more pessimistic cost estimates, so as to avoid overall cost underestimation.

Finally, in order to have a common unit of comparison between language education planning and the other three language policy measures discussed in this report, it is interesting to compute an estimate of its cost in terms of language use by person-hour. Upon completion of a 13-year education begun at age 3, a young bilingual speaker of Basque is 16 years old, and assuming the life expectancy of teenagers to be 76 years, a bilingual has 60 years before him to function bilingually. Whether he will or not depends on a host of factors, but we are interested only in the effect that the education system may have on his patterns of language use. Let us therefore focus on those opportunities to use the language that do not require any other language policy to exist. In other words, we shall ignore domains such as shopping and health services (see Table 21), and refer only to interaction in the family and with friends. Let us adopt the (very conservative) estimate that out of the total daily interaction time between our theoretical bilingual and his family and friends, one hour takes place in Euskera. Let us now multiply the expected remaining lifetime (60 years) by the number of days per year (365) and by the number of hours per day when Basque can be used by people that have become Euskaldunes through the education system (1 hour). This yields a total of 21,900 hours over a lifetime. Using this figure to divide the cost of “producing” a bilingual (EUR 2,162), the resulting cost per person-hour of minority language use associated with education planning is just under 10 cents (EUR 0.0987).

Of course, having speakers of the minority language is a precondition for any of the other promotional measures to make sense. Therefore, we could decide that some of the cost just estimated should be assigned to other activities than family interaction. This would certainly reduce the person-hour cost of minority language use in the family, but it would at the same time increase the person-hour cost of other minority language activities (such as watching TV in Basque). Cost-effectiveness comparisons between various policy measures is much easier if their respective cost estimates are kept separate—with no loss of generality.

#### **4.7 Outcomes**

Most of the data reported below are derived from the 1996 sociolinguistic survey carried out in Euskadi, and results refer to Euskadi alone unless otherwise indicated.

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<sup>26</sup> Putting the total *average* number of years of schooling at 13 may be an overestimation, because not all children attend the (first) three years of pre-school education. On the other hand, we do not include education beyond the lower secondary level, whether in vocational training or pre-university academic streams. On balance, 13 years therefore represents a reasonable figure. In addition, we believe that the *marginal* bilingualisation effect of two years of post-secondary schooling is probably minor by comparison with the bilingualisation effect of the preceding 11 to 13 years.

*Enrolment in pre-school institutions and primary schools*

Since the reorganisation of the school system in 1983, when the four models were established, the share of pupils in models B and D has increased constantly, while the weight of models A and X has declined. The evolution of enrolment in the different models over time is provided in Table 16. We focus on pre- and primary schools, since there was virtually no secondary schooling through the medium of Basque at the beginning of the process.

TABLE 16  
EVOLUTION OVER TIME OF TOTAL ENROLMENT AND PERCENTAGES BY MODEL  
PRE- AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 1982/83 TO 1996/97

MODEL	1982/83	%	1985/86	%	1988/89	%	1991/92	%	1994/95	%	1996/97	%
A	222'744	56	249'384	66	187'434	56	126'761	46	84'572	36	45'269	27
B	41'270	10	50'834	14	6704'92	20	72'929	27	65'499	28	49'357	29
D	58'751	15	72'260	19	74'524	22	73'599	27	80'042	34	71'622	43
X	73'404	19	3'746	1	2'411	1	1'883	1	2'217	1	1'440	1
Total	396'169	100	376'224	100	332'297	100	275'172	100	232'330	100	167'688	100

Source : Departamento de cultura, 1997.

The share of pupils in the tiers concerned enrolled in the B or D model has increased from 25% in 1982/83 to 72% in 1996/97. It is important, however, to make a distinction between two parallel evolutions which actually cover different circumstances. At the beginning of the eighties, model B was still undergoing consolidation. In 1982/83, most of its enrolment was concentrated in the early years of compulsory schooling, because the model was too recent to have any students in the finishing years of the system. Hence, enrolment could naturally be expected to increase. By contrast, model D could bank from the start on the experience developed in the *ikastolak* and its consolidation phase was shorter than for B-type schooling.

However, enrolment in both models has increased at a similar rate, which means that “catching up” or “consolidation” (where initial errors were corrected) cannot be credited for the entirety of the success of model B; it must therefore be explained by other factors. In particular, the setting up of the current school system represented an improvement in the range of education models supplied, but this improvement would have been meaningless if it had not also been a response to a pent-up demand for bilingual or Basque-medium education or, more generally, for language revitalisation. The increase in the percentage of pupils in models B and D must not hide the decline in absolute numbers in recent years. This evolution, however, is inevitable given the brutal drop (58%) between 1982/83 and 1996/97 in the total enrolment in the early tiers of the school system, as a result of demographic changes.

To sum up, we can say that a steadily increasing share of pupils is schooled partly or wholly in Euskera, and given the voluntary nature of enrolment in one or another model, the establishment of the current system can be interpreted as a response to social demand.

Aggregate current figures for the entire education system show that the largest number of students is schooled in model A, followed by models D, B and X:

TABLE 17  
TOTAL ENROLMENT BY MODEL, 1995/96

MODEL	TYPE OF SCHOOL		total
	Public	private	
A	85,645	101,696	187,341
B	34,858	33,601	68,459
D	63,884	49,767	113,651
X	0	3,571	3,571
Total	184,387	188,635	373,022

*Source: data directly supplied by the Department of Education.*

#### *Age structure, overall number and level of competence of speakers*

As pointed out in Section 4.1, the shift to younger age brackets of the bulk of Euskaldunes probably represents the most important demolinguistic change in Euskadi in recent years. Tables 18 and 19 below indicate the share of active bilinguals, passive bilinguals and unilingual hispanophones for selected (1986) and all (1996) age groups. Although both sets of figures come from co-ordinated and comparable Sociolinguistic Surveys taken in 1986 and 1996, published figures use a different breakdown. In order to facilitate comparison, the data for the former have been expressed in terms of the median age of each age group so as to match categories used in the latter. Active bilinguals are speakers who speak Euskera “well” or “quite well”; passive bilinguals are defined as persons who can speak “a little” Euskera or read it “well” or “quite well”. Given the negligible number of unilingual Euskaldunes, the latter are included in the “active bilingual” category.

TABLE 18  
RESIDENT POPULATION BY LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AND AGE GROUP  
PERCENTAGES, 1986

	MEDIAN AGE						Total
	10	20	29	41	57	70	
Active bilinguals	28	23	22	21	25	32	25
Passive bilinguals	36	25	16	11	7	6	17
Unilingual hisp.	36	52	62	68	68	62	58

*Source: Hizkuntza Politikarako Idazkaritza Nagusia (1989: 30-31).*

TABLE 19  
RESIDENT POPULATION BY LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AND AGE GROUP  
PERCENTAGES, 1996

	AGE GROUP						Total
	3-15	16-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	>64	
Active bilinguals	n.a	33	25	21	21	28	26
Passive bilinguals	n.a	37	27	11	6	5	16
Unilingual hisp.	n.a	30	48	68	73	67	58

*Source: Institut culturel basque (1996: 24).*

These figures indicate that the distribution of the population according to the level of competence in Euskera has remained virtually unchanged over 10 years, bar the increase between 1981 and 1986 of the percentage of bilinguals. However, a strong increase of bilingualism (particularly passive bilingualism) among the young can be observed, along with a decline among people over 50. For people aged 20 or thereabouts, figures report an increase from 48% to 70% of active plus passive bilinguals. According to parents' opinions collected in the Surveys, this trend appears to be maintained among people under 16 (Institut Culturel Basque, 1996). Generally, people in their forties or fifties exhibit the lowest level of competence in Euskera. This is probably the result of linguistic repression during the decades of dictatorship. We shall see below that this has a significant impact of language use in the family.

The detailed examination of active bilinguals (Institut culturel basque, 1996) shows that competence in Euskera is better among the relatively older age groups. More precisely, about half (49%) of active bilinguals over the age of 64 claim to speak Euskera better than Castilian (Euskera-dominant bilinguals), 28% report equivalent competence in both languages (balanced bilinguals) and 23% indicate that they speak Castilian better than Euskera (Castilian-dominant bilinguals). The share of Euskera-dominant bilinguals among active bilinguals decreases as one moves to the younger age brackets, down to the 25-34 age group, where only 12% define themselves as Euskera-dominant. The trend is reversed for the youngest group, where 19% consider themselves Euskera-dominant—nevertheless, a much higher percentage of 35% have Spanish as their mother tongue. These data are summed up in Table 20.

TABLE 20  
DISTRIBUTION OF “ACTIVE BILINGUALS” ACCORDING TO RELATIVE  
COMPETENCE IN CASTILIAN AND EUSKERA, PERCENTAGES, 1996

	AGE GROUP						Total
	3-15	16-24	25-34	35-49	50-60	>64	
Euskera-dominant	n.a.	19	12	27	44	49	29
Balanced bilinguals	n.a.	33	34	34	32	28	32
Spanish-dominant	n.a.	47	54	39	24	23	38

*Source : Institut culturel basque (1996: 27).*

An important shift can be observed. Whereas there is a clear divide, among adult speakers, between those who speak Euskera and those who do not, competence among younger speakers are more homogeneous—that is, a higher percentage of the young can speak the language, but their competence is not necessarily very high. Nevertheless, this level is increasing in the 16-24 age bracket, that is, among people reaching the end of their school years. Average competence among them is higher than in the immediately older age group. Schools have certainly played a major role in this evolution, since the 16-24 age group is the first one that has been entirely schooled in the current system, and hence had access to education through the medium of Basque.<sup>27</sup>

#### *Mother tongue and language competence of parents*

Although intergenerational language transmission generally is not a fully conscious process, we can expect that, all other things being equal, efforts to pass on the language will be more dedicated when parents view competence in Euskera as an asset, or as a goal in itself (in looser wording, it could be labelled a “value”). Hence, the answer to the question “To what extent is parental competence in Euskera passed on to their children?” can provide a sensible indicator of parents’ attitude—as could, of course, observed patterns of intra-family language loss. Figures are provided in Table 21.

<sup>27</sup> Statistical data on the *internal* effectiveness of the teaching of Basque can be found in documents published by the *Hezkuntza, Unibersitate eta Ikerketa Saila* (1986, 1989, 1991).

TABLE 21  
MOTHER TONGUE AND LANGUAGE COMPETENCE OF PARENTS  
BY AGE GROUP OF CHILDREN, PERCENTAGES, 1996

MOTHER TONGUE	Both parents Euskaldunes		One parent Euskaldun		Both parents non-Euskaldunes		Total	
	>15	3-15	>15	3-15	>15	3-15	>1s	3-15
Euskera	83	94	19	50	0	0	20	22
Eusk.&S	8	6	18	38	1	2	4	8
p. Spanish	9	0	63	12	99	98	76	70

*Source: Institut culturel basque (1996: 11-12).*

As expected, rates of language loss are smaller in families where parents are (or were) both Euskaldunes. Among young people over the age of 15, the language loss rate is only 9% if both parents are Euskaldunes, while it reaches 63% when only one parent speaks Basque. This figure, which refers to the case of Euskadi, generally applies to Euskal Herria as a whole. However, if the analysis focuses on the youngest age group (3-15), a sharp drop in language loss rates can be observed. It is virtually zero when both parents are Euskaldunes, and is no more than 12% when only one parent is a speaker of Basque—a remarkable contrast with the 63% figure for the immediately older age category. It is also interesting to note that when only one parent is Euskaldun, 50% of children have Euskera as their sole mother tongue.

This reinforcement in intergenerational transmission in the family must not be interpreted in isolation, but viewed in connection with other aspects that are directly dependent on policy measures. Because parents are made aware of state efforts of language revitalisation, they are much more likely to consider that their own efforts in the home are not wasted; on the contrary, school and social activities actually enhance and legitimise their personal efforts. This certainly provides a strong incentive for parents to use Euskera with their children as soon as the opportunity to do so arises—that is, even when only one of the two parents is Euskaldun.

In short, transmission of Euskera as a mother tongue is strongly linked to parents' linguistic competence. It gets stronger as one moves to younger age groups. The school and social context are likely to be reinforcing factors.

#### *Language attitudes*

Apart from the crucially important attitude of parents, attitudes in the population at large play a major part in the success of the efforts made for the intergenerational transmission of the language and the contribution of the education system.

In Euskadi, 46% of the population is “favourable” or “very favourable” to the promotion of Euskera, particularly through the Euskaldunisation of the young (Institut culturel basque, 1996). 38% are “indifferent” and 16% are “opposed” or “strongly opposed”. This overwhelmingly positive attitude is confirmed by the wish of 82% of residents (which therefore means a majority of non-Euskaldunes) to have their children schooled at least

in part through the medium of Euskera. Interestingly, in Euskal Herria as a whole, one third of the people who are opposed or strongly opposed to language promotion would enrol their children in type B or type D schooling.

There is, however, a discrepancy between attitudes and behaviour. For Euskal Herria as a whole (we have no data on Euskadi alone), only 3 adults out of 10 have tried to learn or to improve their Basque outside the school system. The main reason quoted for making the attempt at all is that “it is the language of the Basque country” (31%). Political and cultural motivations are stronger among residents who are favourable to Euskera; people opposed to the promotion of the language but who have nonetheless taken steps to learn it mostly give instrumental (professional reasons) for doing so.

These results can be interpreted in relation with perceptions of self-identity. 51% of residents in Euskadi view themselves as Basque *and* Spanish, while 32% see themselves as Basque only. Different perceptions seem to be connected, on the one hand, to geographical origin (Euskadi, Navarra or Iparralde), and, on the other hand, to language competence. The higher the level of proficiency in Euskera, the more likely a self-perception as Basque alone. 73% of Euskaldunes think that it is necessary to *know* Euskera in order to *be* Basque, but 66% of the total resident population of Euskadi disagrees with this proposition.

In general, the population of Euskadi has a favourable attitude to the teaching and the use of Basque, even if only a minority makes a personal contribution to it. This attitude has direct implications on the demand for language education in and outside the school system, and explains in large part the success of the B and D models.

#### *Use of Euskera*

Obviously, language use is a relevant question only for 20% of the population, that is, Euskaldunes; the following discussion is restricted to the case of speakers aged 15 or more. The data apply to the entire Basque Country, but are relevant for Euskadi as well, since 82% of Euskaldunes live in Euskadi. The frequency of use of Euskera has been surveyed for 14 “domains”, and the corresponding figures are reported in Table 22. Obviously, “domain” is used in a less formal sense than in the definitions provided in the literature (e.g. J. Holmes, 1992); percentages in Table 22 refer to individuals who *mostly* use Euskera, *or* Castilian, *or* both in each domain.



TABLE 22  
USE OF EUSKERA AND SPANISH BY DOMAIN  
PERCENTAGES OF RESPONDENTS, 1991 AND 1996

USE WITH/AT	1 9 9 1			1 9 9 6			TREND
	Euskera	Euskera+ Spanish	Spanish	Euskera	Euskera + Spanish	Spanish	
mother	59	11	29	56	8	36	-
father	57	8	36	52	7	41	--
spouse	51	12	38	50	11	39	-
children	61	13	27	67	12	21	++
family	53	17	30	47	18	35	--
friends	44	22	34	49	20	31	++
shops	43	17	41	44	16	40	+
colleagues	37	24	39	44	17	39	++
market	76	9	15	77	8	15	+
priest	71	9	21	72	10	17	+
bank	44	12	44	51	13	35	++
town hall	48	11	41	56	15	30	++
children's	60	7	33	78	7	15	++
teachers							
health	22	9	68	30	14	55	++
services							

Source : Institut culturel basque (1996: 35-36).

The last column of Table 22 ("trend") indicates the positive or negative evolution of the rate of use of Euskera. Increases or declines comprised between 1% and 4% are denoted by "+" or "-", while increases or declines exceeding 5% are denoted by "--" or "++".

Some 50% of Euskaldunes use mostly Euskera in most domains, and 10% to 20% use both languages. Spanish (or, in Iparralde, French) only is used by the rest. The Institut culturel basque (1996) observes that between the 1991 and 1996 sociolinguistic surveys, a significant increase in the use of Euskera can be observed, and that this increase is considerable in some domains.

In the family context, Euskera is most and increasingly used with children (from 61% to 67%). By contrast, use with parents declines, a fact which reflects the relatively low proportion of Euskaldunes in the 40-50 age group. In other words, a steadily rising percentage of Euskaldunes have non-Euskaldun parents. Hence, communication with them can only take place in Spanish or French. This situation is fairly common in Euskadi, where data reveal that the younger the age of the person polled, the less likely he/she is to speak Euskera in the family (31% of those aged 16-24, as opposed to 62% of those over the age of 65).

As regards non family social interaction, Euskera is most frequently used at the market (77%), a fact which reflects the strong presence of cultural tradition in this particular context. About half (49%) of Euskaldunes use Euskera with their friends, and this rate

reaches 69% if cases of bilingual exchange are included; corresponding figures for 1991 are lower, at 44% and 66% respectively.

The 1996 *Sociolinguistic Survey* confirms a trend already observed in 1991, namely, that the higher the concentration of Euskaldunes, the more likely it is that Euskera will be used in the family or with friends; the converse relationship also holds. In Euskadi, data show that when all or almost all family members are Euskaldunes, the percentage of those using mostly Euskera is 70%; this figure reaches 74% among those aged 65 or more, 63% among the 25-34, and 70% in the 16-24 age bracket. The rate of use of Euskera between friends is significantly related to speakers' age, and reaches 68% among people aged 65 or more; it drops to 33% in the 25-34 ages group, at picks up again (to 38%) among those aged 16-24. This latter increase must be traced back to the emergence of a large cohort of Basque-speakers—in large part due to the development of the B and D models—and hence by the increase in the density of Euskaldunes in one's circle of friends in the younger age groups.

A strong increase in the use of Euskera from 37% to 44% can be observed in relations with colleagues. This can probably be explained by the arrival of the younger Euskaldunes on the labour market, as well as by the current euskaldunisation process of the civil service in Euskadi. There again, there is a link between patterns of language use and the density of Basque-speakers. This probably also explains the significant increase in the use of Euskera in the town hall (from 48% to 56%) and with the health services (from 22% to 30%). The success of the B and D models is likely to be the chief reason for the considerable increase (from 60% to 78%—even 85% in Euskadi proper) in the use of Euskera with schoolteachers.

Generally, the use of Euskera in the family has been declining, except in interaction with children; the overall decline mainly reflects the passing away of an age group with a relatively high proportion of Basque-speakers. The use of Euskera in all other situations has increased, sometimes considerably. One very important result is the relatively higher propensity of members of the 16-24 age group to use Basque with their friends, suggesting that skills taught at school are put to use outside of the classroom context.

#### **4.8 Evaluation**

Despite its obvious success with parents, the development of models B and D does not, in our opinion, suffice to explain the increase in the percentage of Euskaldunes, particularly when the overall demographic evolution is also taken into account. There is no doubt that schools play a major role, if only because the introduction of models B and D represented a considerable increase in the offer of Basque-medium education. However, other conditions have made the revitalisation policy successful. We have identified the following six conditions.

##### *Social motivation*

During Franco's regime, the efforts of the central government to stamp out regional identities and languages had considerably hampered the intergenerational transmission of Euskera, but not to the point of destroying it. As indicated in Section 4.1, the survival of

Euskera has been made possible, among other factors, by the existence of the *ikastolak*, whose activity was wholly dependent on private support. The very existence of such structures denotes the presence of a strong social demand for the maintenance of the local language and culture. At present, the active involvement of the population may be less visible because the state is now able to take the lead. Nevertheless, this involvement is still present, both in those *ikastolak* that have chosen to remain independent, and in the lively tradition of *bertsolari* contests. This strong social motivation among Euskaldunes appears to have, at least in part, won over some unilingual hispanophones, as evidenced by the high rate of overall support for the promotion of Basque.

#### *State support*

Euskera clearly benefits from determined state support. Official will to revitalise the language has been given legal substance by the adoption of the *Basic Law of the Standardisation of the Basque Language* in 1982, that is, just four years after Euskadi received its statute of autonomy. This Act still provides the legal basis for current language policy. However, the various Acts, decrees or official circulars reflects a real commitment to the language. Its counterpart is a significant allocation of financial resources to language revitalisation.

#### *Creating domains of use*

Policy in favour of Euskera logically requires the language to be learned, but it is no less important to ensure that there are opportunities to use the language afterwards. To confine language learning to the school context would have rendered revitalisation efforts meaningless, as pointed out by Urdangarin (1997: 6, our translation): “In the case of the C.A.V., where the younger generations are schooled in bilingual models or in Euskera, it is urgent to guarantee intergenerational transmission as well as to keep up with the effort made in the domains that these young people enter. Keeping up this effort means that domains of use for Euskera must progressively be created, in order to make sure that the work accomplished to this day has a future; otherwise, the toil of these young people could remain devoid of meaning and be functionally useless in the areas of activity they are about to move into.”

In short, it is useless to promote the learning of Euskera unless there are opportunities to use it. Recognition of this condition explains why the language planning authorities set great store by extending the domains where Euskera can be used, through a variety of measures such as normalisation in the civil service, the development of specialist terminology for various professions, and awareness campaigns on the importance of using Euskera, particularly in the family. Data presented in Section 4.7 show that the rate of use of Euskera is increasing in all non-family contexts, particularly those directly concerned by the normalisation strategy; at another level, the use of Euskera in business and commerce is being promoted (Urdangarin, 1997) and Basque versions of well-known software packages are available.

*Teaching of Euskera outside the compulsory school system*

The formal teaching of the language outside the school system may not represent an *essential* condition for the success of revitalisation through the school system, and the reputation of Euskera as a very difficult language must not be ignored;<sup>28</sup> it is likely to have discouraged more than one aspiring speaker. However, language teaching outside the school system has certainly resulted in the spread of Euskera among adults, both through the *euskaltegis* and through the availability of teaching through the medium of Basque at university. More importantly, the *euskaltegis* are where schoolteachers receive the language instruction which enables them to reach the required language profile and to teach through the medium of Basque.

*Regular adaptation of language policy*

The language planning authorities devote a great deal of attention to the monitoring of language policy and its adaptation to changing sociolinguistic conditions. The Deputy Ministry for Language Policy therefore carries out regular surveys to collect up-to-date sociolinguistic data, review policy practices in the light of these results, and adapt the administrative structure of the organisms in charge of language policy.

*Modernity*

Although we have no hard evidence of this, the documents available on the school system as well as on the response of the general public to the development of education through the medium of Euskera hint at an additional success factor, namely, the apparent modernity of spirit of the entire endeavour. This certainly needs to be investigated further. In any event, the Basque education system appears to be quite different from the Irish one, particularly the early days of the latter (see Section 5.1), whether in terms of educational methods, cultural references and cultural content. In our view, this reinforces the strategic importance of reassessing critically the extent to which cultural heritage must be given a central place in revitalisation policies, particularly in the context of the education system. The other difference between the Basque and Irish cases, whose importance must not be underestimated, is that the Basque education system relies on partial or full language immersion, whereas Irish is mostly taught as a subject to Irish children, except in the Irish-speaking (“Gaeltacht”) areas, as we shall see in the following chapter.

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<sup>28</sup> It is estimated that from 1,000 to 2,000 hours of instruction are necessary to acquire a good command of Euskera.

## 5. DIRECT LANGUAGE PROMOTION IN IRELAND: THE CASE OF *GAILLIMH LE GAEILGE*

### 5.1 *Background on the Irish Language*

Irish is a Celtic language of the Goidelic branch, closely related to Scottish Gaelic, and more distantly to the Celtic languages of the Brythonic branch (Breton and Welsh). The current position of Irish is the result of a long story of attrition over the centuries, followed since the second half of the 19th century by more or less successful attempts at revitalising the language.

Ireland was invaded by Celts around the middle of the 5th century B.C., except Ulster, which was conquered almost a millennium later, around the time of the christianisation of the island.<sup>29</sup> Over the seven next centuries, and notwithstanding the existence of a “high king” (*Ard Rí*) for the entire country, the small kingdoms that constituted Ireland were frequently at war with each other, not to mention Viking invasions in the 9th century. England’s involvement began in the second half of the 12th century when one of the kings of Leinster asked Norman knights for support. The knights carved out some land for themselves and stayed in Ireland, while also remaining vassals to the king of England. In order to keep his vassals’ influence in check, as well as to bring the independent Irish church under papal rule, king Henry II invaded Ireland in 1171. However, English control remained somewhat loose and did not extend beyond Ulster and the area surrounding Dublin.

In the 16th century, the reformation, the ensuing religious wars and large-scale colonisation by Protestant settlers from Scotland and England deeply altered this state of affairs; in particular, the Scottish settlement in Ulster in 1610 has had major political consequences to the present day. Ireland ended up on the losing side of the British civil war and of the Jacobite wars; the victory of William of Orange at the battle of the Boyne in 1690 firmly established Protestant, British domination until independence, with systematic discrimination against Catholics. Oppression worsened after the 1798 uprising, which was quelled by British forces and resulted in the abolition of the Irish Parliament.

Various elements of discriminatory legislation were progressively removed in the course of the 19th century, but the 1846-51 famine, when millions perished or emigrated, severely drained Ireland and further weakened the position of the Irish language. On the other hand, the widespread perception that the British crown had done nothing to

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<sup>29</sup> Our presentation in this and the following few paragraphs inspired by an unsigned and undated, yet excellent manuscript entitled “Les racines historiques du conflit en Irlande du Nord”; credit goes to its anonymous author.

alleviate the Irish tragedy strengthened claims for home rule in Ireland. Two plans for home rule were defeated in Westminster, and the third was adopted but suspended shortly afterwards when the first world war broke out. The 1916 Easter Rising was rapidly suppressed, but reinforced the legitimacy of the pro-independence party. After the civil war that tore Ireland immediately after World War I, the 1921 Treaty between England and Ireland established the latter as an independent republic (Éire) comprising 26 of the 32 counties of Ireland.<sup>30</sup>

By that time, however, Ireland was largely anglicised and Irish was no longer the everyday language of the majority of the population; only impoverished rural communities along the western and southern seaboard remained predominantly Irish-speaking (Williams, 1988). Since the second half of the 19th century, individuals and groups in Ireland (particularly the Gaelic League) had been actively promoting the revival of Irish, as part of an attempt to “recreate a consistent ethnic ideology which would reverse the meanings associated with being Irish, and would return dignity and social status to the Irish people” (Tovey, Hannan and Abramson, 1989: 14). These authors describe the pre-independence revival initiatives as four-stage process, starting with a form of “antiquarianism”, moving on to an intellectual movement centred on “the systematic rediscovery of ‘the nation’”, then on to a adoption of this perspective by civil and political leaders, and eventually to its dissemination among the population at large.

By 1900, 109 national schools offered Irish as an extra subject, and by 1922, this number had risen to 1,878 (Tovey, Hannan and Abramson, 1989). The Republic embraced the language ideology of the Gaelic League, which over time turned out to have ambiguous effects on the fortunes of the language. Although revivalist movements must be credited for having relegitimised the language and given it a central ideological position in the fight for independence and the recreation of Irish identity, their inheritance has proved a heavy one to bear. First, it resorted to myths which “elevated the cultural and social residues surviving in the western islands and the Gaeltacht into a fountainhead for a new society”, with the calamitous consequence of entrenching an automatic association between, on the one hand, the Irish language itself, and, on the other hand, circumstances such as rurality, social, political and religious conservatism, and economic backwardness. Second, because of its heavy reliance on schools to restore competence in Irish among a predominantly anglicised population, “Irish [became] fatally associated with the purgatorial fires of the classroom [...]”.<sup>31</sup> The Irish state failed to implement a full-fledged policy of functioning through the medium of Irish; language promotion, in addition to being confined to the stifling context of schools and a reactionary church, became bureaucratised. The result was that “[this] did, over time, ensure that few members of the population lacked ‘at least a few words of Irish’, and that a substantial section today are moderately fluent bilinguals, [but] pride in and love of Irish appears to have survived almost despite the experience of ‘school Irish’. All the evidence suggests that for the majority of the population it takes a few years out of school to recover one’s love for the language, after the drubbing it gets in the formal school process” (Tovey, Hannan and Abramson, 1989: 20).

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<sup>30</sup> The six counties that remained under British rule are all located in Ulster; of Ulster’s nine counties, three (Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan) became part of the Republic.

<sup>31</sup> In the words of an unnamed 1940s author quoted by Tovey, Hannan and Abramson (1989), to whom the reader is referred for an insightful historical treatment of the link between language and identity in Ireland.

According to census figures, over one million people in the Republic of Ireland are able to speak Irish. This figure, however, represents a strong overestimation of the demolinguistic importance of the language, because it includes a majority of speakers of Irish as a second (possibly third) language, with widely diverging levels of competence. A more relevant figure for actual fluent speakers would be in the region of 45,000 speakers, of which 30,000 live in anglicised areas but use Irish as “a network language in defined situations”. The rest, comprising some 15,000 speakers, live in the Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking areas), whose total population is approximately 80,000. The figure of 15,000 itself is the object of some discussion; Hindley (1991: 90-91) provides estimates which, depending on the criteria chosen, range from a little below 7,000 to a little more than 21,000.

To be sure, it would be unfair to make the mistakes of a partly misguided policy entirely responsible for the decline of Irish; other geo- and demolinguistic features have compounded the problem. First, Irish is characterised by a significant degree of linguistic variation associated with the various Gaeltachtaí, or Irish-speaking regions. This variation is particularly manifest in speech, notably accent, although some syntactical features and lexical traits may vary.<sup>32</sup> Second, the geolinguistic fragmentation of Irish-speaking areas over several Gaeltachtaí contributes to the sense of frailty of the language.

The term “the Gaeltacht” is used to refer collectively to those areas where Irish is used as an everyday language by a majority of residents. In the plural, “Gaeltachtaí” refers to these areas individually. Although it is not unusual to describe an extremely small area (for example, a single village) as “a Gaeltacht”, it is customary to mention seven, namely: (1) Dún na nGall (Donegal, which actually covers only small sections of the county by the same name); (2) Maigh Eo (Mayo, where a similar restriction applies); (3) Gaillimh (Galway—the area is also referred to as the Connemara Gaeltacht; the city of Galway itself, however, is heavily anglicised and can be considered a mostly anglophone pocket in the Gaeltacht); (4) Ciarraí (Kerry, covering only the three western peninsulas of the county); (5) Corcaigh (Cork—though only small areas in the Western part of county Cork are Irish-speaking); (6) Port Láirge (Waterford—here again, only a small portion of the county, around An Rinn, is Irish-speaking); and (7) An Mhí (Meath—where the actual Gaeltacht area only includes two small rural pockets in the county) (Údarás na Gaeltachta, n.d.).<sup>33</sup> The deceptively close word “Galltacht” collectively refers to the anglicised parts of Ireland—that is, the rest of the country.

After independence, the official designation of Irish-speaking areas was intended as an instrument for policies aiming at strengthening Irish, either directly through schooling, or indirectly through economic development schemes that would give residents an incentive to stay in Irish-speaking areas (Hindley, 1991). Debate goes on as to whether the

<sup>32</sup> For a glimpse into the intricacies of linguistic variation in Irish, even within a given region, see e.g. Ó Dochartaigh (1987).

<sup>33</sup> The official definition and extent of the Gaeltacht has changed in several ways over time. It was first officially defined in 1926, with a distinction between “true” and “speckled” Gaeltacht (Fíor-Ghaeltacht agus Breac-Ghaeltacht). The distinction was abolished in 1956, when the concept of the geographically smaller New Gaeltacht (Nua-Ghaeltacht) was introduced. Small additions to the official Gaeltacht took place in 1967, 1974 and 1982 (Hindley, 1991).

instrument was an appropriate one, whether it could have been used more efficiently, and whether the predicament of Irish would have been worse without it (Fennell, 1981; Williams C., 1988; Ó Coileáin, 1986; Hindley, 1991). Although the resident population of the Gaeltacht has increased in recent years, the percentage of Irish speakers has declined there (e.g. from 86.5% to 77.4% between 1961 and 1981). Again, these figures may represent a strong overestimation, since they include people whose competence in Irish is significantly below their competence in English. According to Ó Cinnéide and Keane (1988), major anglicising influences are: (a) television; (b) language use by government agencies, which make an inadequate overall use of Irish; (c) industrialisation; (d) the influx of English-speaking residents; (e) the predominance of English in local urban and trading centres, such as the city of Galway; (f) persistent inadequacy of educational arrangements; and (g) the unavailability of entertainment in languages other than English, specifically Irish.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that the success of recent developments in language policy, such as the establishment of an Irish-medium television channel (Teilifís na Gaeilge, which started operating in November 1996), or the Gaillimh le Gaeilge project presented below, appears to hinge on the rejuvenation of the image of Irish, and on the effort made to stress the relevance of Irish in modern life, in addition to providing a link with identity and tradition.

### ***5.2 Direct language promotion as language policy***

Direct language promotion is a key element of all revitalisation policy. Of course, every language policy measure can be interpreted as a form of promotion. The distinguishing feature of direct promotion, however, is that it is more explicitly targeted at people's language attitudes. This concept is used here in a general sense; it informs the linguistic dimensions of actors' utility function<sup>34</sup>. To the extent that, in our analytical framework, the utility function (or, equivalently, the "set of preferences" or "objectives") is a crucial explanatory factor of behaviour, including language use, direct language promotion addresses the very core of the problem.

The goal of direct language promotion is to alter speakers' and/or non-speakers' attitudes in a positive way; a positive change in attitudes, in terms of the utility function, does not necessarily imply that the absolute attractiveness of activities in the majority language declines, but certainly means that the relative attractiveness of doing things in the minority language increases.

Case studies of minority language survival and decline, perhaps even more than the theoretical language planning literature, keep insisting that positive attitudes are essential, even indispensable for language revitalisation.<sup>35</sup> In the case of Irish, for example, Fennell observes that "[...] the attempt by the Irish state to save the dwindling Irish-speaking minority, and the failure of this attempt, offer valuable experience and

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<sup>34</sup> Or, to put it differently, it influences people's preferences in favour of the minority language.

<sup>35</sup> One possible reason why the role of attitudes is recognised more explicitly in applied than in theoretical literature is that its inclusion in a theoretical construct would require a general, fully worked-out model of language shift; however, such a theory appears not to be available at this time (Appel and Muysken, 1987; Grin 1999b).



lessons to all who would embark on such an enterprise. The Irish example serves to clarify certain things which were not clear beforehand. [...] The basic prerequisite is that they [the members of the linguistic minority] acquire the will to stop their disappearance as a linguistic community [...]. Having acquired the will to save themselves, they will almost inevitably—human nature being what it is—acquire the institutional and financial means to take the appropriate measures, unless they are forcibly prevented from doing so.” (1981: 39). This informal deduction, inferred from one particular case, finds a formal expression in the algebraic model underpinning the present study, which demonstrates that under the set of fairly general assumptions made, the attractiveness of minority language activities, as reflected in the utility function, must be sufficiently high if the language is to break out of its spiral of decline.<sup>36</sup>

Direct language promotion may target the entirety of a language group living in the jurisdiction of the authority implementing the policy. One famous example is Singapore’s “speak Mandarin” campaign, whose aim was to persuade ethnic Chinese to use Mandarin instead of southern dialects of Chinese (mostly Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, and Hakka) (Tham, 1990; Baetens Beardsmore, 1994). However, it can also target a subset of the language group concerned, as in the case presented in this chapter. In this context, the success of the policy must primarily be evaluated in terms of attitudinal changes among the subset concerned; only in a second step can inferences be made about its effects on the population as a whole, particularly in terms of our ultimate concern, that is, actual language use.

It is important to understand that the attitudinal change aimed at can be complex, and the promotional message does not need to be as crude as in the Singaporean case. People’s motivations are complex, and an attitudinal change in favour of a language does not necessarily mean that people who disliked the language suddenly decide to love it. A change in people’s affections can certainly occur; in final analysis, it is undoubtedly an asset for long-term language maintenance. Attitudinal change, however, can be much more subtle, and hinge on non-emotional reasons. The *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* project does just that: direct language promotion targets people’s perceptions of Irish, but keeps away from lofty moral admonitions: its chief aim is to show that using Irish yields benefits, quite apart from whether one genuinely likes the language or not. Paradoxically, this approach is one of the best protections against tokenism, which plagues many revitalisation measures.

### 5.3 The origins of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*<sup>37</sup>

*Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge* (henceforth CnaG) is a federation of state and non-state organisations active in various aspects of the promotion of Irish. Its budget is covered by

<sup>36</sup> Using a distinct but related dynamic model, Grin (1992) shows that even if such attractiveness is low, speakers’ anticipations that a turnaround is about to take place can be sufficient, for a transitory period, to cause minority language use to increase. The reader is referred to this paper or to a less technical presentation of the same model (Grin, 1993).

<sup>37</sup> Most of the data presented in Sections 11.3 through 11.6 is derived from the annual reports of the *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* project (Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996) and by information supplied directly by the chairman and staff of Comhdháil Náisiúnta. The authors are particularly indebted to Peadar Ó Flatharta and Fionnuala Ní Mhuirí.

the Department of the Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht (*Roinn Ealaíon, Cultúir agus Gaeltachta*).

With an ad hoc grant from this Department (which was, at the time, responsible for the Gaeltacht only), CnaG commissioned an evaluation of (i) the cost of special measures supported by the state to promote the Galway Gaeltacht; (ii) the economic activity which accrues from these measures; (iii) the extent to which state expenditure on the provision of these measures, together with the economic activity to which they give rise, contribute to the social and economic well-being of Galway Gaeltacht and City alike (Ó Cinnéide and Keane, 1988: 7). These authors have estimated that state intervention in favour of Irish generates some £17.0m in gross household income throughout the Galway Gaeltacht (£13.1m for the city of Galway). The report recommended increasing the visibility and use of Irish in Galway; as a result, the *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* project (“Galway with Irish”) was officially launched in 1988.

The goal of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* is “to further the position of Galway as the prime bilingual city in Ireland, to develop the Irish face of the city, with a view to reinforcing its attractiveness to visitors from other parts of the country as well as from abroad, particularly individuals with an interest in lesser-used languages and cultures (*Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge*, 1992: 5; our translation). Apart from a recognition of the monetary benefits that the city of Galway derives from the maintenance of Irish, three important ideas form the backbone of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*.

- (i) First, it starts out from the observation that what happens in Galway has a considerable influence on what happens in the Connemara Gaeltacht. Galway is its prime commercial, educational and transportation hub, in addition to being the largest town in the region, with a population of a little over 57,000 (according to the 1991 census). Galway city is the place where Irish-speakers from the surrounding Gaeltacht come to shop, access bank services, etc. Being considerably anglicised, the city of Galway indirectly partook of the erosion of the nearby Gaeltacht; it offered a typical illustration of one of the dominant features of the linguistic environment in Ireland, namely, the fact that Irish is a majority language only in scattered rural areas, but has largely been evicted from cities and towns (by contrast, Welsh has remained an urban language, for example in Aberystwyth, Caernarfon or Bangor). In theory, it would have been possible to try and develop an urban-like centre in the Gaeltacht, in the hope that it would serve Irish-speakers in Irish. However, there would have been no guarantee that such a shopping or services centre would escape anglicisation. Apart from the technically and financially cumbersome aspects of such a plan, if it had failed owing to creeping anglicisation, it would have done more harm than good. Hence, the logical alternative was to reintroduce Irish in Galway.
- (ii) Second, a choice was made to target the business community, because of its importance in influencing patterns of language use in commercial life. Participation in some or other form of commercial exchange makes up a sizeable share of people’s waking time; furthermore, these moments are symbolically important, probably because they are contact-intensive, and put individuals in relation with each other. Even the most anonymous consumption act implies that the consumer

projects himself or herself as a person in society who owns (or does not own) a particular product; hence, consumption has social meaning, and the linguistic parameters of commercial exchange have notable strategic implications in terms of language attitudes and language use. This general notion can be exemplified by the much simpler observation that the marketplace (in a broad sense) may well be the prime locus where social norms of what is “modern” and what is not are negotiated between actors. If the minority language is present on the marketplace, it becomes associated with socially-defined modernity. We regard this aspect as a *sine qua non* condition for long-term language maintenance.

- (iii) Third, *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* does not rely on regulation, but on persuasion. It is not presented as a project undertaken primarily for the good of the language. Its selling argument is that Irish is good for the city of Galway in general, and for its business community in particular. No appeal is made to some sense of duty or obligation. The clear message is that people are welcome to participate in *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* if—and only if—they find it in their own advantage to do so.

In what follows, we shall concentrate on the main, but not only line pursued in the project, namely, the presence (particularly in terms of visibility) of Irish in business and commerce.

#### **5.4 Agencies responsible**

Although CnaG is in charge of managing the project, is not the only actor to make decisions about *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*. First, as a federation of organisations, CnaG speaks for the latter. However, the members of CnaG as separate bodies (such as the *Údarás na Gaeltachta*, or Gaeltacht Authority, a body in charge of assisting and furthering socio-economic development throughout the Gaeltacht areas) have not been directly active in *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*.

Involvement of other partners takes place on the terrain. This is reflected in the composition of the steering committee, which includes representatives of official bodies, volunteer organisations, and other individuals with specific skills considered useful for the success of the enterprise. In 1996, for example, the steering committee included representatives from CnaG, the Galway Regional Technical College, Iognáid College, the Department of the Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, the Galway Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Galway Business Innovation Centre, the association *Glór na nGael*, and the Vocational Education Committee of the City and County of Galway. The other structures of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* are the Irish language committee of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and a toponymy committee.

The partners of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* are, by definition, local businesses, or the management of the local branch of national or international companies who decide to increase their use of Irish—because they find it to their advantage to do so.

The Department of the Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht provides financial support that covers the cost of operations, but not the working time donated by the members of the various committees (including CnaG officers).

### **5.5 The operation of Gaillimh le Gaeilge**

From the start, a large part of the work of Gaillimh le Gaeilge has been directed at persuading the business sector in the city to make a significant use of Irish for inside and outside signs (Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge, 1996: 12), and reporting on this side of the project is the main goal of this chapter. Other activities, however, are also part of the project, notably encouraging the use of Irish on stationery and packaging, as well as in direct interaction with customers. Additional forms of promotion targeting the public at large (as opposed to the local business community) are being developed since July 1995; their aim is to affirm and publicise the position of Galway as the hub of Irish and Celtic culture—or, as one of the yearly reports puts it, to develop the city as a “Mecca of the Celts”.

The business community is approached in a variety of ways, often with logistic support from the Galway Chamber of Commerce. Techniques include direct mailings, extensive personal contacts, and the organisation of well-attended business lunches.<sup>38</sup> However, the contents of the promotional message is what makes the originality of Gaillimh le Gaeilge. It is organised around the following arguments.

The basic argument (with which the Chamber of Commerce was initially approached) is drawn from the report by Ó Cinnéide and Keane (1988) mentioned above. It is pointed out to members of the business community that, as a result of the state’s efforts to maintain and revitalise the Gaeltacht (with the implication that better socio-economic conditions in the Gaeltacht eventually create better conditions for the long-term survival of Irish), the share spent on the Galway Gaeltacht generates some £13.1m per year in extra household income for the city alone, and that this spending power is directly linked to the survival of Irish; in other words, and contrary to many people’s preconceptions, the presence of Irish yields benefits, and losing the language would hurt the city much more than seeing one or two multinational companies leave.<sup>39</sup>

CnaG then impresses on businesspeople that Irish is an irreplaceable element of the city’s identity—a relevant notion for people who are aware of the value of corporate identity. The maintenance of Irish, far from being an economic hindrance, constitutes one of the chief assets that a city in a rather peripheral location can capitalise on. Although no hard data are available to estimate this effect, the recent but perceptible growth of cultural tourism throughout Western Europe provides a business argument for increasing the visibility of Irish. Just as in the Welsh case, the Irish language is “an important element in defining our sense of place” (Bord na Gaeilge, n.d.).

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<sup>38</sup> At the time of data collection for this study, these business lunches featured a guest speaker and are regularly attended by over 50 participants. They normally take place in restaurants that make use of Irish, for example by offering bilingual menus (at the time of writing, 24 of the 64 restaurants in the city of Galway do so). These events are conducive to creating a network whose “conduit” is the language, although language itself is not the main concern of participants.

<sup>39</sup> Two points must be borne in mind when interpreting this income estimate. First, there are alternative (i.e., not language promotion-related) uses of these funds, which could possibly yield higher cumulative effects; however, we have no information on this point. Second, to the extent that the revenue from which policy measures are funded has been raised over the entire country, this type of spending clearly implies inter-regional redistribution.

The line of argument deliberately avoids any appeal to people's sense of duty, and stresses that a decision to increase the visibility of Irish must be made on the basis of good business sense, or possibly concern for the economic vitality of Galway—a cogent point once it has been shown that the city as a whole does benefit from its association with the maintenance of Irish. For this reason, *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* offers no grants whatsoever: if it is in the interest of some company to have bilingual signs, there is no reason for someone else to cover the cost of such signs. Once a shop decides to use Irish (which, in practice, means adding Irish alongside English rather than replacing English by Irish), the management can turn to the *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* staff who can assist with translations, devising slogans in Irish and sprucing up graphical design.

Experience has shown the value of intervention at an early stage. For example, CnaG staff monitor planning applications for new supermarkets or shop fronts, and approach businesses before decisions about outdoor or indoor signs are likely to have been made. Regular contact is also maintained with sign-writers, who are in a good position to persuade clients (that is, businesses putting up new signs or refreshing existing ones) to move to bilingualism.

### 5.6 Costs<sup>40</sup>

There is no formal estimate of the total cost of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*. Over the years, an average of 1.5 full-time positions has been devoted to running the project. This uses up some 90% of a special grant from the Department of the Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, ranging from IR£ 20,000 to IR£ 35,000 per year; this latter amount has also been granted for 1997; at the current rate of exchange, this amounts to approximately EUR 36,000. The remaining 10% are used for overhead and travel expenses. Overhead includes the rental on office premises in Galway (because CnaG offices are located in Dublin).

This amount of IR£ 35,000 does not include the time volunteered by the various committee members, whether as representatives of associations or state bodies, or single individuals. In particular, it does not cover the time spent by CnaG officers; this input can be roughly estimated at one half-day per week which (taking holiday time into account) amounts to a little less than 25 full working days (or approximately one month full-time) per year. Allowing for the value of this time and additional sunk costs, we evaluate at some EUR 45,000 per year the total cost of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* to the authorities.

How can the cost of the project per unit of language use be evaluated? The complete absence of figures makes this a difficult exercise, but we consider it helpful nonetheless to provide rough estimates, if only to have some basis for a cost-effectiveness comparison. Given that the project has been running since 1988, total expenditure to date is in the region of EUR 405,000 (that is, 1997-1988 x 45,000). We assume that on average, residents of Galway and the surrounding Gaeltacht spend 4 to 5 hours per week for shopping in Galway. Let us further assume that a little less than a quarter of this total,

<sup>40</sup> As in the preceding chapters, the figures in national currency had initially been converted into New Zealand dollars. They are here expressed in Euros, using the exchange rate between New Zealand dollar and Euro applying on the day of the introduction of the Euro, namely 1:0.4506 on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999.

say 1 hour per week, can now take place predominantly in Irish, as a result of the implementation of the *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* project. This yields an increase in the use of Irish for shopping of some 50 hours per year, assuming this use was minimal before. Of course, this increase is accessible to those people who do speak Irish and are therefore in the position to do their shopping in the language. In the Galway area (city and county), the 1991 census puts this figure at 76,798 (20,835 and 55,963 people respectively). Let us note that using this figure reflects the assumption that speakers of Irish who do not reside in the region, but are only occasional visitors from other parts of Ireland, are not affected. Hence, the total number of shopping hours per year that can take place in Irish as a result of the project can be conservatively estimated at 3,839,900.

Since this is a yearly figure, we could compare it with the expenditure per year of EUR 45,000. However, what makes this increased use possible is not just current expenditure, but the stock of signs put up over preceding years as a result of the project. Since we are not dealing, in this case, with a pure capital stock expenditure, we decided to interpret the total of the expenditure over the eight preceding years (that is, EUR 360,000 since the beginning of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*) as a once-and-for-all prior investment. Assuming a 7% rate of return on capital (see Chapter 2 on bilingual signs in Wales), the opportunity cost of the investment is EUR 25,200, which we add to the current period expenditure of EUR 45,000, yielding a total cost of just above EUR 70,000. Dividing this latter figure by our estimate of the total shopping hours that can take place through Irish as a result of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*, we obtain a per hour cost of less than 2 cents (EUR 0.0182). This remarkable cost-effectiveness must be considered even higher if we allow for the possibility of increased use of Irish among predominantly anglophone residents and tourists.

Of course, we may wish to apply even more conservative estimates, taking account of the following two considerations. First, of the resident Irish-speaking population, some hardly do any shopping, either because they are too young, or because another household member does most of the shopping for them. Second, it may be the case that shoppers who currently use Irish also did so before *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* was initiated, and would have continued to do so even if the project had not been launched. In this case, only a more modest increase in the number of hours when Irish is used could be credited to *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*. Allowing for these limitations, let us therefore halve the number of shopping hours in Irish that are assumed to result from the project; the person-hour cost is still a remarkably modest 3.6 cents.

### **5.7 Outcomes**

In sharp contrast to the large-scale, more ambitious policy measures explored in the preceding chapters, *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* is modest in terms of geographical scope, target population, and expenditure. In addition, it is very much a grassroots initiative—a feature we consider important, because of the crucial role played by independent, non-state actors in language revitalisation. This implies, however, that an assessment of its outcomes can only be a rather informal one, given the absence of hard data on those variables which the project seeks to alter.

Insofar as the *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* project targets the language attitudes of local businesspeople, the most appropriate measurement of its results should be expressed in terms of attitudinal changes among the target group since the inception of the project. Unfortunately, such information is not available. Furthermore, even if data on attitudinal changes can, at least in principle, be collected through opinion surveys, our real concern is not so much with attitudes themselves as with people's preferences or objectives (in economic jargon, their "utility function") that is shaped, among other things, by attitudes.

Though direct validation is not possible, indirect evidence on attitudinal change can be derived by observing behavioural changes in businesspeople's use of bilingual signs. This interpretation can be seen as the (simplified) mirror image of what economists call "revealed preference theory",<sup>41</sup> and deserves a few words of explanation.

The problem hinges on the fact that it can be questionable, in our case, to assume the relevant concept of the price of "shop signs" to have remained constant. On the one hand, the added cost (or, using economic jargon again, the "marginal cost") of using one more language for interior and exterior signs is presumably positive, though modest. On the other hand, what matters here is not just direct financial expense, but the increase in profits that bilingualisation is expected to generate. If both effects exactly offset each other, and if the occurrence of bilingual signs increases nonetheless, then only an attitudinal change can explain this evolution<sup>42</sup>. However, if *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* convinces businesspeople that bilingualisation does yield a financial gain, bilingualisation can occur even without any attitudinal change among businesspeople, because the perspective of increased profits provides incentive enough. Hence, one could object that ex post bilingualisation does not provide the proof we seek that the promotional policy has succeeded in changing attitudes.

Nevertheless, a generally sound assumption, when studying the behaviour of businesspeople, is that once they are in possession of adequate information, they are quite capable of identifying by themselves the language strategies that maximise sales or profits, and do not need to be told twice what these strategies are. In other words, if it had been obvious from the start that there was any substantial money to be made by bilingualising shop signs, they probably would have done so without having to be nudged in this direction by CnaG; this is the main reason why signs in Japanese or Arabic have appeared in the show-windows of upmarket jewellery shops in many Western European cities. It follows that if *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* has had any effect at all, this effect can be traced back to two distinct factors: first, the availability of additional information (in the form of the Ó Cinnéide and Keane report); second, a change in conventions and norms, which are subsumed under the broader analytical construct of "attitudes" (closer investigation of this second aspect should, of course, pay attention to the interplay between businesspeople's personal attitudes, and what each perceives to be the dominant

<sup>41</sup> Revealed preference theory has been designed to deduct the hidden utility function (or the indifference curves that represent the utility function) from the observation of changes in consumption patterns following price changes, under the assumption that preferences are stable over time. Ours is a symmetrical case, where the emphasis is placed on the effects of changes in preferences, not prices.

<sup>42</sup> Or, stated differently: if you expect increased sales as a result of putting up bilingual signs, but if this extra profit is eaten up by the cost of these signs, there would be no reason to bother, which means that *another* reason must explain the increase in the occurrence of bilingualism.

attitudes of competitors). It is impossible, in the absence of highly detailed information, to distinguish the effect of the first and second factor, but we believe that the increase in the use of Irish must in large part be credited to the second, that is, a positive attitudinal change. Hence, one way to judge the outcome of the *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* project is to evaluate the absolute number of bilingual signs that have appeared since its inception or the increase in the percentage of bilingual shop signs, and to identify the characteristics of those businesses that have chosen to increase the visibility of Irish.

Since the beginning of the project, over one hundred shops have put up bilingual signs, and according to the information available at the time of writing, 135 carried bilingual signs. Another 83 businesses that also participate in *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* use Irish for other purposes, such as invoice forms or stationery. The CnaG report notes that: “It is enough to walk down any street to see the commendable results of this work. The bright signs in Irish as well as the bilingual signs contribute very much to the cultural face of Galway, which is of service to visitors as well as residents of the town itself.” (*Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge*, 1996: 12, our translation). Moreover, “city supermarkets and major stores carry full bilingual signage. [...] Up to thirty city hotels and restaurants issued bilingual menus [...]; the use of the language in oral communication is also increasing rapidly” (Research and Consultancy Unit, 1995: 4). Although this is not the result of deliberate planning, it is mostly the service and retail sectors (hotels, restaurants, department stores, etc.) that have been targeted, and where the most notable changes have taken place. Relatively high-profile, sometimes upmarket businesses have been prioritised; hence, the effects of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* are particularly visible in the centre of the city.

The above results provide strong indication that *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* has, indeed, succeeded in modifying the attitudes and the patterns of language use of its target public. We can only conjecture that it also performs well with the general public. Just like bilingual road signs and the provision of minority language broadcasting, the visibility of the language in business and commerce can be a powerful lever for altering people’s perception of Irish, and for broadening the range of connotations carried by the language.

As regards actual language use, effects can be broken down in two parts, namely, time spent reading signs in Irish instead of English, and time spent interacting with sales clerks in Irish instead of English. No statistical information for the evaluation of these effects is available; however, the patterns of language use in the general public can only have been positively affected, even if only to a modest extent, by the recreation of Irish-medium commercial activities. Evidence provided by observers of the local language scene indicates that patterns of language use in commercial exchange have significantly shifted in favour of Irish.

### **5.8 Evaluation**

When evaluated at the local scale for which it is intended, the *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* project must be considered a success. It has convinced an increasing number of businesspeople that using Irish makes sense; as a consequence, the project has made a major contribution to the visibility of Irish in business and commerce in the city of Galway. Further, we can safely assume that the attitudes of the public at large have been positively affected,



because the unsentimental nature of business operations suggests that the use of Irish in commerce reflects concerns other than moralistic admonitions which, over time, have lost much of their edge. In short, if even business uses Irish, it must mean that Irish is truly relevant.

Here again, our chief concern is with the conditions that have enabled *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* to work well. Four conditions seem to have played a key role in this success.

1/ First, the project has been carried by committed actors—CnaG officers and staff, but also other individuals and groups represented in the steering committee of the project. As in the case of Wales, where the role of the *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* has already been pointed out, this particular revitalisation measure owes much of its success to the vision of an “avant-garde”—in the political, even “language policy” sense (see Section 12.2).

2/ Second, *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* functions in direct partnership with the target group; it is an example of a remarkably close co-operation, even overlap, between the initiators of language policy and the people whose behaviour language policy seeks to influence. This offers two advantages. First, language policy proposals are specific to Galway and can regularly be fine-tuned to fit the changing conditions under which the target group operates. Second, language policy is completely at home and is not imposed from the outside. It prevents it being perceived as overbearing, interventionist or pushy. To the extent that the success of any language policy crucially hinges on an endorsement of its objectives by the groups targeted (and, ultimately, by the population at large), the value of partnership and consultation is probably undeniable.

3/ Third, the emphasis on the interests of the city and its economic vitality offers a welcome change from the moralistic (and hence potentially demoralising) tone of much promotional policy, particularly in the case of Ireland (see Section 5.1). *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* offers a different way to rationalise one’s use (or non-use) of Irish.

4/ Fourth, the broader economic context has probably been favourable. The commercial relevance of lesser-used languages is generally getting increasing attention in Europe. Marketing research has shown that there is considerable goodwill towards the Irish language (O’Neill, n.d.). Developing the irishness of products, and hence using the language as a way for goods and services to stand out in a rapidly diversifying offer “can be the difference between survival and extinction, and between rising profits and declining market share” (ibid.). The visibility of minority languages increasingly becomes a selling argument for fast-developing cultural tourism that offers an alternative to mass-consumption leisure services (Price, 1997). The timing was therefore ripe for managers and business owners to be persuaded that using more Irish made good sense.

## 6. A TENTATIVE ASSESSMENT

### 6.1 A summary of the policies

Having analysed four cases of promotional policies, we now turn to a comparative assessment. We begin by summarising in Table 23 the main features of these policies.

Table 23 is made up of eight columns.

The first two columns contain cost-effectiveness information. In order to compare policies in terms of a common unit of measurement, we report in column (1) the *person-hour cost of minority language use generated by the policy*. Let us recall that the cost figures computed in Sections 2.6, 3.6, 4.6 and 5.6, as calculated in the preceding chapters, are derived from expenditure by the relevant language planning authority, that is, by the state, and represent cost-effectiveness measurements from the standpoint of the authorities. Column (2) assigns a cost-effectiveness index value to each policy, on a 1 to 10-point scale. Such a scale was preferred to a simple ranking from 1 to 4, since it allows for some indication of the order of magnitude of differences. In money terms, these differences go from 1 to over 100.

Columns (3) to (7) report on specific and overall impacts. Rankings were assigned on the basis of the estimates of direct effects computed in the corresponding chapters, and on our informed judgement of the indirect effects of the programmes described. The overall impact is a rounded arithmetic average on the same scale. It should be noted that index values for impacts run from highest (1) to lowest (10), whereas they run from lowest (1) to highest (10) for costs. In other words, the closer to 1 an index value, the more interesting the policy, whether on the cost or on the impact side.

Finally, column (8) provides a best practice index, which is the sum of the values in columns (2) and (7) divided by 2.

Table 23 shows that Welsh road signs turn out to be the least useful of the four policies studied. Of the other three, Irish language signs in the Galway business district score highly because of their very low cost, but their impact remains modest. The other two, Welsh-medium television and Basque education planning, stand out as the two best policies, with the prerequisite nature of language education giving it a clear edge.

TABLE 23  
COST AND IMPACT OF LANGUAGE POLICIES

Policies	PER-HOUR COST OF	MINORITY LANGUAGE USE	IMPACTS			
	(1) EUR/hour	(2) <b>Index value</b>	(3) Competence level of speakers	(4) Number of speakers	(5) Language attitudes	(6) Language use
Welsh road signs	1.98	<b>10</b>	nil (10)	nil (10)	medium (4)	low (8)
Welsh-medium television	0.50	<b>4</b>	med-high (3)	med-low (7)	high (1)	high (2)
Basque education planning	0.10	<b>2</b>	high (1)	high (2)	med-high (3)	<i>prerequisite</i> (1)
Irish business signs	0.02	<b>1</b>	low (8)	nil (10)	med-high (3)	low (8)

*Note: Index values run from highest (1) to lowest (10) for impacts and from lowest (1) to highest (10) for costs. attractive the policy.*



As with all attempts to make synthetic comparative judgements, Table 23 must be interpreted with caution. Although each item in the Table rests on a detailed analysis, its function is not to dictate the adoption of some policies instead of others, but to provide a point of reference in the debate over the selection of language policies, particularly if the debate addresses the problem of *systematic* cost-effectiveness comparison.

In our view, it is just as important to focus on the conditions that have made these policies successful.

In each case, some conditions that have made the policies successful have been identified. In the preceding chapters, we have noted the following points.

For bilingual signage in Wales, lobbying by committed organisations supported by large sections of the opinion has been crucial. In the case of minority language broadcasting in Wales, high-profile political campaigning banking on the existence of a strong pent-up demand has also proved essential. This, however, was combined with the professionalism of Sianel Pedwar Cymru, which also broadened the scope of perceptions of the Welsh language.

The state has taken a leading role in the expansion of the teaching of Euskera, but the evidence indicates that its success owes very much to a strong social motivation and to a pent-up demand for language learning in the population; the transposition of language skills to language use has been achieved through an effort to create a variety of non-school contexts where the language can be used. Constant monitoring of the language policy helps identify priorities.

Finally, direct language promotion in the city of Galway underscores the role of committed groups, of broadening the perceptions of the language in public opinion, and of co-operation with the actors concerned by the language revitalisation plan.

Since an important issue for language revitalisation is the sustainability of language policies, it is interesting to note that the Welsh TV and the Basque education policies have been pursued for several years with stable sources of funding, and their existence has never been seriously questioned.

Let us now move on to a more structured discussion of the conditions for successful language revitalisation, by establishing links between the factors inferred from empirical observation and the underlying analytical framework.

## **6.2 Conditions for success**

The core question of this study is: “What works?”. On the basis of the preceding survey, our answer is “anything *can* work—*provided favourable conditions are present*”. The crux of language *policy*, therefore, is not so much to select and fine-tune the best possible policies as to ensure that these favourable conditions are present. The task of language *planners* is not just to select, design and implement sensible policy measures, but also to make sure that the necessary success conditions are met—and, of course, to create such conditions if they are not.

This section focuses on the set of conditions that must be met for successful language revitalisation, in relation with the analytical framework that we consider necessary in order to approach it in terms of policy analysis. However, we shall be departing somewhat from the clean time patterns assumed in the underlying formal model—in particular, some conditions are necessary for policies to be proposed and adopted (that is, they *precede* the formal policy process); others need to be met once policies have been adopted, if they are to be successful. In the main, however, favourable conditions must accompany the revitalisation process throughout its successive stages.

### *Political conditions*

The analytical framework starts out from the assumption that the authorities *do* have language policy objectives, that the latter—in our case—essentially focus on language revitalisation measured in terms of language use, and that societal resources will be deployed to this end. This is expressed by the three boxes (“language policy objectives”, “list of policy options” and “societal resources constraints”) at the top of the first panel in Fig. 1.

However, our analysis of selected policies shows that such official readiness to engage in language policy has not always been spontaneous. In the Welsh case, both bilingual signs and Welsh-medium television had to be wrested from British authorities. In Euskadi, it took the end of fascism in the Spanish state and the devolution of powers to the C.A.V. for the teaching of Basque on a large scale to be developed. In general, it is much easier to find cases where minority language policy had to be fought for than instances where the authorities (usually identifying, and identified with majority interests and views) unreservedly took the necessary steps. Most of the time, the active involvement of individuals and groups has proved crucial, whether political parties, community organisations, specifically language-related associations, or committed language activists.

Obviously, their campaigns in favour of minority language visibility, minority language broadcasting, or minority language schooling would probably have come to naught if they had not already enjoyed a base of support in the community at large. However, the community members’ willingness or readiness to increase their use of the language apparently needed some clear goals to be set, and demands, possibly enshrined in a more or less explicitly political agenda, to be formulated and be given public visibility in political debate. This can be summarised as *condition No. 1*, which for want of a better term, we shall call the “avant-garde condition”:

*1. An active and well-organised language avant-garde made up of associations independent from the State apparatus, and whose goals explicitly feature language use and language visibility as top priorities (as opposed to non-linguistic aims such as, say, administrative autonomy) is necessary to raise the profile of language revitalisation issues. The existence of “third-sector” organisations (that is, distinct from both government and business), is indispensable when there is official resistance to the notion that revitalisation policies are either desirable or necessary. In cases where the State itself is already committed to language*

*revitalisation, such organisations provide a useful bridge with civil society and endow language policy with a force of conviction that purely official bodies typically fail to guarantee.*<sup>43</sup>

Willingness to engage in language planning is one thing; material and financial capacity to do so is another. More precisely, the authorities must be ready to devote adequate resources, some symbolic, but many of them financial, to the achievement of policy objectives. Even in the case of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge*, state support in the form of a modest grant is necessary. Again, such favourable dispositions are not necessarily forthcoming, whether because allocating funds to minority language revitalisation is a *new* kind of expenditure, possibly perceived as somewhat of an extravagance, or because such allocation can imply raising additional revenue *or* reducing expenditure on other legitimate objectives. In either case, spending money on minority language revitalisation is a *redistributive* measure. It should be remembered that when the State does not provide minority language goods and services (whereas such services are available in the majority language), this asymmetry is, in itself, a redistribution mechanism in favour of the majority.

The necessary redistribution need not carry a heavy price tag, but it is unavoidable. In the case of three of the four policies studied in the preceding chapters (all but Basque education policy), the *financial* extent of the redistribution is modest, mostly when considered on a per-capita basis. The *symbolic* aspects of redistribution necessarily mean that some form of privilege (for example, monopoly of the airwaves) is taken away from the majority. In other words, the relative position of the majority is affected, but its absolute position does not have to be (for example, in the case of S4C, the establishment of Welsh medium television has not reduced the amount of viewing time available in English). *Condition No. 2*, which we shall label the “redistribution condition”, can then be formulated as follows:

*2. Authorities must be willing to redistribute social resources, both financial and symbolic, in direction of the minority language community. Financial redistribution need not be considerable on a per-capita basis, but it is strictly positive. Symbolic redistribution entails a decrease in the relative dominance of the majority community, but need not imply the reduction of any other non-material amenities available to its members.*

The offshoot of condition 2, however, is that majority opinion must be willing to go along with the redistribution of financial and symbolic resources. This is where the State (which is often perceived as being primarily a representative of majority interests) can play an irreplaceable role that language activists and their organisations cannot. In particular, it can *endorse* minority language revitalisation and *campaign* in its favour in order to win majority support for the corresponding policies—including the modest extent of resource redistribution they entail. The message to the public, therefore, is one stressing the *normalcy* of devoting resources to minority language revitalisation. The

<sup>43</sup> Further examination of this condition would require an extensive discussion of the *theory of social movements* and of *mobilisation*, which would exceed the scope of this study. For an in-depth presentation, the reader is referred to Cohen and Arato (1992), and for a shorter recent overview, to Rossiaud (1997).

Welsh experience with bilingual signs is particularly telling in this respect (Bowen, 1972), because authorities ended up earnestly endorsing this aspect of minority language visibility, which helped make it normal in the eyes of the English-speaking public. This can be summarised in the form of a “normalcy condition” (*condition No. 3*):

*3. The authorities must be willing to endorse and defend language revitalisation and the associated redistributive implications before majority opinion, in order to convince the latter that devoting resources to minority language revitalisation and maintenance is a normal state of affairs.*

#### *Technical effectiveness conditions*

If conditions 1, 2 and 3 are met, it becomes possible to engage in full-fledged language policy. We can now turn to a second set of conditions of an essentially technical nature. These technical conditions are easily understood if formulated in terms of our analytical framework, as represented in Fig. 1. In the following discussion, we shall focus on the four types of measures discussed empirically in the preceding chapters, namely, the provision of minority language (goods and) services; skills development; acquisition planning; and direct minority language promotion.

Higher or lower technical effectiveness is one of the dimensions of the link between *policy measures* and the *language status indicators* at which they are targeted (the arrows between the first and second panel of Fig. 1). Not much needs to be said here about technical effectiveness, except the obvious fact that such effectiveness must be guaranteed: a policy geared to the provision of minority language services must result in an *actual* increase of such services provided; a skills development scheme must *really* shift the distribution of skills to the right.

One important point, however, is that *conditions for achieving technical effectiveness are clearly in the province of specialists within the corresponding areas of activity*. Technical effectiveness hinges on the professionalism of graphic designers of bilingual signs, broadcasters, film-makers, marketing strategists, language teachers, school administrators, and experts in the culture whose associated language(s) is (or are) being promoted. Of course, they must have access to adequate information and resources, and they play a key role in defining the amount of resources needed; however, the question of resource availability has already been dealt with in condition No. 2. It also goes without saying that technical effectiveness will benefit from the involvement of all parties, including, of course, minority language users themselves. Language planning authorities, however, retain an irreplaceable role for overall co-ordination, and for the integration of specific measures into the higher-level perspective of public policy.

As regards the *provision of minority language services* affecting the *supply-side factors of the linguistic environment*, two types of measures implemented in Wales have been examined. In both cases, technical efficiency has been achieved. The practical aspects of bilingual signage (size, typeface, etc.) have been carefully weighed, resulting in the full bilingualisation of traffic signs and hence in a significant increase in language visibility. In the media sphere, S4C was given sufficient resources to be of consequence, allowing the channel to meet high professional standards, as evidenced by its good ratings and



international reputation. The success of S4C must also be attributed in part to its capacity to expand the range of representations with which the language is associated. More precisely, it has helped to free Welsh from exclusive association with the sphere of tradition. Our endorsement of the modernising function of minority language television must not be interpreted as an uncritical approval of “modernity”. Actors will also draw on other resources, including tradition, to contribute to the social construction of modernity. However, we believe that institutions, including the state, should help individuals and groups equip themselves with the tools to participate in the negotiation of what modernity is—or could be—and that minority language broadcasting of the kind that S4C has so successfully developed provides just such a tool.

As regards *skills development* targeting the *competence level of speakers*, our assessment of the Basque case is a mixed one. The distribution of competence levels among speakers has been shifted to the right (that is, competences generally increased), but in more modest proportions than could have been expected. This may be explained in part by the relative difficulty of the language. Although it is not unusual for linguists to dismiss this aspect, it regularly crops up in the discourse of other actors, whether language learners or persons actually involved in some or other aspect of language policy. Hence, it must be given adequate attention; we agree with Labrie and Quell (1997: 4) when they point out that, in general, “a small degree of foreignness can facilitate the learning of a foreign language but is not enough to explain why some languages appear to be more attractive than others”. This, however, harks back to matters of *internal* effectiveness (often, and somewhat misleadingly, called internal “efficiency” in the education economics literature), which falls within the purview of language teaching specialists, whether in general or in the particular case of Euskera.

As regards *acquisition planning* aiming at an *increase in the number of speakers*, figures indicate that the Basque policy has generally been a successful one, particularly in the younger age brackets, although less so than could have been hoped. Limitations can be traced back to two chief causes: first, the inadequacy of type A schools, where students only pick up a limited amount of Basque; second, the lack of opportunities to keep on using the language after leaving school (interestingly, this has also been identified as a factor of language loss among secondary learners of Welsh). Thus, technical efficiency, as measured in terms of the net increase in the number of speakers by age group, speaks in favour of partial or full immersion models, and requires the development of schemes that provide incentives to use the language after leaving school. This latter aspect, however, brings us much closer to another set of effectiveness conditions, which will be addressed shortly.

Finally, as regards *direct minority language promotion* aiming at language attitudes, our examination of the *Comhdháil Náisiúnta*’s campaign with local businesses in Galway suggests that it is one of the relatively few instances, in the Irish case, where this type of endeavour has been persuasive. Key aspects of this success appear to have been its capacity to emphasise the relevance of Irish to modern life and its demonstrative tone, where the target public was told about a facility and informed of measurable benefits associated with language maintenance. However, great care is taken by the language planning body not to appear preachy, and to insist that the choice to use or not to use the minority language is a free, and (in this particular case) essentially business decision. The

case of *Gaillimh le Gaeilge* also suggests that success hinges on the involvement of the more or less extensive group of actors targeted by a given policy measure.

The preceding paragraphs can be summed up in terms of a “technical effectiveness condition” (*condition No. 4*) as follows:

*4. The design and implementation of language policy measures must be approached and carried out professionally. Specialists at the applied level in the fields where individual policy measures operate (broadcasting, language education, marketing, etc.) have a key role to play in suggesting and trying out improvements in those policies and assessing the amount and nature of resources needed. However, constant input from and involvement of language users are necessary. The language planning authorities must regularly monitor the implementation of policy measures and update them, while systematically integrating them in a vision of language planning as a form of public policy.*

We are aware that the technical effectiveness condition can look as something of catch-all one. We should insist, however, that this is not the case. Let us simply recall here that the chief usefulness of a policy analysis approach is to establish the *logical connection* between policy measures at one end and outcomes at the other end, and to do so in a systematic fashion, where the reasons for engaging in revitalisation policy, as well as the fundamental allocative and distributive implications of doing so, are taken into account. We have noted that this tends to be the weak point of most of the language planning literature, and hence the most pressing issue to address in order to lay the groundwork for sound policies. The mostly macro-level perspective this requires must also be able to *accommodate* more micro-level considerations, and be flexible enough to make room for unforeseen ones. It is, however, at quite another level of analysis that specific details of implementation can be discussed. For example, our analysis confirms that partial immersion at school (teaching some subjects through the medium of the minority language) emerges as an effective way to increase the number of bilinguals; furthermore, partial immersion is likely to appeal to many parents who do not want their children to be schooled entirely in the minority language. But only specialist knowledge of the language concerned and the associated set of cultural values can tell us which subjects it would be advisable to teach through one or the other language, the precise nature of educational materials to be developed, etc. These issues clearly lie outside our remit and the goals of this study<sup>44</sup>.

Hence, the generality of condition 4 is not just the logical consequence of prioritising the macro-level of policy analysis, it is also a matter of caution. Its chief implication needs to be pointed out: it stresses the complementarity between various areas of expertise, both at the analytical and applied levels.

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<sup>44</sup> A comparison between the Irish and the Basque system suggests that the latter, which relies on partial or full immersion, is more effective than the former, where the target language is mostly taught as a subject. In addition, the set of cultural references called upon in the language education process appear to be different, with the Irish system relying more on tradition, at least over most of the relevant period. This is likely to have contributed to the very limited degree of success of teaching Irish in school. Selecting the appropriate extent to which tradition should be referred to or extolled in minority language instruction for contemporary youth is a typical example of a technical effectiveness issue.

### *Bilingual behaviour conditions*

The conditions outlined so far, if they are met, ensure that a language revitalisation enterprise can be undertaken at all, and that it will be done well. They are also likely to ensure that many of the desired results are *achieved*, in that the status of the language improves, the number of speakers as well as the distribution of their competence levels increase, and attitudes become more favourable to the minority language.

Unfortunately, the above does not suffice to guarantee significant increases in language *use*, although increasing language use has been, from the start, defined as the ultimate policy objective. This discrepancy has been noted again and again in the language planning literature, particularly in connection with minority language proficiency: the fact that people know the language does not necessarily mean that they use it. In terms of our analytical framework, the crucial link that makes or breaks the success of a language policy is to be found between panels 2 and 3 of Fig. 1, that is, in the degree to which improved *language status indicators* positively affect *bilinguals' language behaviour*.

Let us first consider conditions for *language-related constraints* to become less stringent, as a result of *improved supply-side factors in the linguistic environment* and *higher competence levels of speakers*. Essentially—and abstracting for the moment from bilinguals' set of preferences—the language-related constraints must be *significantly* modified by the policy measures. This can be expressed with reference to the implicit cost of minority language activities in the majority or in the minority language. This cost must drop dramatically. If the drop in the implicit price is too modest, actors who have a choice of carrying out their activities in either language (because they are bilingual) and who were used to functioning largely in the majority language (because of, and contributing to, minority language attrition) will have little reason to modify their patterns of language use.

Until S4C was established, only a very small amount of Welsh language television was available. Anything beyond modest consumption of this service was impossible, or would have been thinkable only by overcoming virtually insurmountable problems. More precisely, it would have required potential consumers (that is, highly committed Welsh-speakers with a strong desire to watch television in Welsh most or all of the time) to be willing and able to cover, year after year, the cost of a Welsh-language television channel, and to shoulder substantial start-up costs—not to mention considerable time expenditure to initiate the project and endless battle with the authorities to secure the necessary authorisations. Clearly, “buying” more Welsh-language television watching would have been well beyond the means of even the most eager potential consumers; in other words, *the implicit cost of minority language television watching, before S4C went on the air, tended to infinity*. The establishment of the channel, however, provided access to Welsh programmes (in addition to the few hours hitherto available on the BBC) at a negligible (and purely indirect) per-hour and per-capita cost *to the individuals concerned*.<sup>45</sup> Hence, the setting up of a Welsh language television channel has brought

<sup>45</sup> The cost to viewers of the funds earmarked for the financing of S4C (3.2% of total commercial broadcasting revenue) is hardly worth mentioning. Either commercial channels may have to slightly reduce the volume or the quality of *other* productions, or they will have to slightly raise the average price level of

about a dramatic drop, from infinity to almost nothing, in the non-time cost component of the activity “watching television in Welsh”.

To clinch this point, let us consider the reverse case where a policy measure only has a modest effect on the relevant implicit prices. Let us also bear in mind that the question of agents’ preferences has been put aside for the moment. Suppose the introduction of subsidies to minority language publishers results in a 20% drop in the unit price of children’s books in the minority language. All other things being equal, this is likely to have a negligible or zero effect on the number of such books purchased, and on the amount of time during which minority language adults read stories to the young in the language. Such a modest drop in price could have a non-marginal effect only under a very specific structure of preferences. Let us make the most general assumption possible about the latter and suppose that bilingual parents are *a priori* indifferent, between reading children’s stories in either language (this assumption, however, will be relaxed shortly). All other things being equal, they will tend to use majority language books unless equivalent minority language books are strictly cheaper. Since smaller market size presumably causes minority language books to be more expensive to begin with, and if the price difference is 20% or more, a 20% drop in price will have no effect on consumption.

Let us summarise the preceding paragraphs in terms of an “implicit price condition” (*condition No. 5*) as follows:

*5. If conditions 1 through 4 are met, for a given set of preferences (discussed in condition 7 below) and excepting from particular (and arguably unusual) preference structures, an improvement in the supply-side factors of the linguistic environment can cause minority language use to increase significantly only if the implicit price of minority language activities decreases markedly, or becomes strictly lower than the implicit price of the equivalent activities in the majority language.*

Although condition 5 has been discussed with respect to the provision of minority language services, it lends itself to a similar interpretation with respect to skills development. All other things being equal (particularly *if* they have no *a priori* preference for conducting business in either language), people will generally use whichever language requires less effort from them. In the absence of a preference for carrying out activities in the minority language, actors will therefore increase their use of the minority language as a result of skills development only if, in certain domains at least, they become more proficient in the minority than in the majority language.<sup>46</sup>

Obviously, it is possible that such a goal may only be achieved in a small number of individual cases, particularly for adults. In many cases, a policy stressing skills development may not satisfy the shadow price condition; hence, this type of policy can

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advertising time, which advertisers will, in turn, cover with an increase in the unit price of the goods and services they sell. In either case, the financial effect on viewers is negligible. Besides, the cost of S4C is not linked to its welshness, but to its very existence as an additional channel.

<sup>46</sup> Urdangarin observes that “the second most important factor [of the use of Euskera] is one’s relative ease at expressing oneself in Euskera or in Castilian. Persons who have more facility expressing themselves in Euskera use it more frequently than those who speak Castilian more readily (1997: 11; our translation).

be effective *only if bilinguals have a net preference for carrying out their activities in the minority language*, as we shall see shortly. This dialectical relationship between cost and objectives, which is at the very heart of the essentially economic question of the utility-maximising allocation of scarce resources, is, of course, particularly important in the case of activities that constitute the “home-family-neighbourhood-community” complex held up by Fishman (1991) as the core of language reproduction.

For aggregate minority language use to be of any consequence, the language must be practised by a sufficiently large number of speakers. This justifies *acquisition planning*, which can be said to have *sine qua non* nature. Assuming technical efficiency conditions are met (condition No. 4), acquisition planning *will* result in an increase in the number of speakers. The problem then is to guard against this number going down as people lose their language skills through lack of use after leaving school, eventually slipping back into the group of non-speakers of the minority language. In other words, schemes for *individual minority language maintenance* must be provided.

This appears to be the weak point of *all* revitalisation policies, including those presented in the preceding chapters; this problem has been discussed more extensively in the case of Euskera. The underlying condition is distinct from the shadow price condition, since the latter refers to the absolute and relative price of activities that actors would be engaging in anyway, whether in one or the other language. Rather, what is at issue here is the need to expose the public to the minority language as much as possible. There seems to be no easy solution to this problem; for example, it can be costly and awkward, if not annoying to many, to keep insisting that bilingual adults attend regular refresher courses. However, we believe that *language visibility* can play an essential, if indirect, role in helping bilinguals remain so. Broadcasting obviously has major strategic importance in this respect, but even apparently weaker measures like a bilingual traffic signs policy can help prevent individual language loss.

This can be summed up in terms of an “individual language maintenance condition” (*condition No. 6*):

**6.** *Acquisition planning must not be confined to the school system or adult language courses, and schemes must be developed with the specific aim of helping bilinguals maintain their minority language skills. All forms of language visibility can constitute valuable instruments to this end.*

Let us finally turn to the question of attitudes and preferences, which represents the locus of what is undoubtedly the single most important condition for successful language revitalisation. Unoriginal as this may sound, it bears repeating that favourable attitudes in the community, first and foremost among speakers, is a *sine qua non* condition for success. In this study, the term “attitudes” is used in a broad sense, closely linked to the “utility function” of theoretical economics, which summarises people’s preferences, objectives and values; in the following discussion, we take the liberty to treat these terms as synonyms.

We have seen earlier that a minimal dissemination of favourable attitudes is necessary for the “avant-garde” to be able to exert pressure in favour of revitalisation policies

(condition No. 1), should such pressure be needed (and it usually is). We have also noted that majority opinion must be favourably disposed towards revitalisation (condition No. 3). However, what is at issue here is the *preference structure of bilinguals themselves*. This preference structure is precisely what direct language promotion targets. Assuming that promotional campaigns are technically effective (condition No. 4) and succeed in positively altering attitudes, it is still important to identify the conditions for this latter change to bring about an increase in the amount of activities carried out in the minority language.

This question is probably the most complex of all in the entire language revitalisation adventure, yet it is also unavoidable. To fully grasp this point, it is necessary to recall that unless the implicit prices of minority language activities are significantly lower than those of *most* similar majority language activities (and this is usually *not* the case), *only a strict preference for conducting at least some business in the minority language* can compensate for an unfavourable relative price structure, and ensure that the minority language will be *used*—and not just learned, known and upgraded to a more respected status. If such a condition is not met, language revitalisation efforts are pointless. It is interesting to note that directly or indirectly, each of the policies examined in the preceding chapter rightly target attitudes, although the effect is less apparent in the case of education planning.

Of course, the importance of attitudes, preferences and values must be qualified.

First, it would be unfair to invoke the *sine qua non* character of bilinguals' preferences for minority language activities to place the entire burden of "ensuring favourable conditions" on the shoulders of the minority community. Unfavourable attitudes are almost systematically the result of oppression or disenfranchisement, usually at the hand of authorities historically concerned with establishing the political, social and economic dominance of the majority community. It is therefore not acceptable to blame the victims for their discouragement.

Second, it would be unwise to single out attitudes as the sole condition of successful revitalisation policies, because attitudes change, and may be negatively affected by temporary setbacks, or even by the fact that language revitalisation is a slow process. An excessive reliance on attitudes therefore places revitalisation policy at the mercy of the inevitable ebbs and flows of sentiment, fashion or expectations.

Third, it should not be forgotten that six other conditions for language revitalisation to actually occur have been identified. Nevertheless, favourable attitudes probably represent the single most important condition, and one that eventually pulls the others; in other words, we believe that in general, *supply follows demand*.

Let us summarise this point in the form of a "strict preference condition" (*condition No. 7*):

*7. Minority language revitalisation requires bilinguals to have, all other things being equal, a net preference for carrying out at least some of their activities in the minority language. If such a preference does not exist at the outset, influencing*

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*attitudes in order for this preference to emerge should be the top priority of the revitalisation policy.*

This does not mean that *all* activities should or will take place in the minority language, but excludes the case where bilinguals are indifferent between carrying out their activities in one or the other language, and the case where their structure of preferences is such that they do not set store by spending at least a certain fraction of their time on activities taking place in the minority language. Of course, if there is a strong net preference for minority language activities, then price differences will matter less than if such preference is less vigorous.

In short, we end up with the following seven conditions for successful revitalisation policies:

1. the avant-garde condition;
2. the redistribution condition;
3. the normalcy condition;
4. the technical effectiveness condition;
5. the shadow price condition;
6. the individual language maintenance condition;
7. the strict preference condition.

### **6.3 Demolinguistic size and geographical distribution**

Readers will observe that this list does not include some sort of “minimal number of speakers condition”. In our view, this is unsurprising, because theoretical research shows that meaningful thresholds are not a matter of demolinguistic figures alone, but of combination of such figures with other dimensions, particularly attitudes (Grin, 1992, 1993); further, claims that some minimal numbers are “necessary”, though apparently commonsensical, have never been *demonstrated* (some of these claims are discussed and criticised by Pool, 1991). This question, however, requires a few words of comment.

The fact that some minimal number of speakers does not emerge as a success condition does not mean that demolinguistics are beside the point, but that they must be seen in conjunction with other aspects. Let us first observe that even very small numbers are in no way incompatible with any of the seven conditions listed above. Group size will simply affect the implications of some of them, particularly conditions 2 and 4. If the minority language community is smaller, total redistribution will be slightly less, while per-capita redistribution (if the denominator is the size of the *minority* language group) will be more. As regards condition 4, and depending on the specific measures adopted, catering to the language needs of a smaller group will affect the structure of the educational system that must be put in place. However, no impossibility arises.

The one sense in which size matters is that of cost. The smaller the size of the community, the larger the unit cost, in policy terms, of minority language use. If the number of Welsh-speakers were one million instead of 500,000, the person-hour cost of Welsh-medium broadcasting would be in the region of EUR 0.25. If, however, there were only 50,000 Welsh-speakers, the unit cost of a person-hour of television watching would

climb to some EUR 5. Generally, the smaller the pool of speakers, the higher the unit cost of delivering a certain language outcome. This cost may, in theory, tend to infinity.

There is no basis for characterising this amount as cheap or, on the contrary, too expensive. The notion that some good or service is “too expensive” in the absolute is meaningless. Any price can be considered acceptable or excessive, depending on the importance subjectively given to a commodity, in comparison with the importance given to other (and also costly) commodities. As we have shown elsewhere (Grin, 1994a; Grin and Hennis-Pierre, 1997; Grin and Vaillancourt, 1997), minority language maintenance is very much a *public good*, one that cannot be “purchased” and “consumed” privately; revitalisation is, of necessity, a collective endeavour. It follows that any judgement about the acceptability or excessiveness of its cost can only be made in the context of democratic political debate. In a policy analysis perspective, “adequate” demolinguistic size is a political question.

Finally, no particular pattern of geographical distribution stands out as a condition for revitalisation policies to be successful. In all the cases studied, the minority language population is fairly scattered, often lives in predominantly rural areas, and a majority of the people who can claim ethnic association with the language do not speak it, and live in majority language areas.

The absence of geographical variables from the seven success conditions may help to lift an ambiguity: concentration or dissemination of speakers are, of course, determining features of the *linguistic environment*, and hence of the cost of maintaining or altering it. For example, concentration of speakers has an impact on the transportation costs (both in time and money) of minority language users. Another general observation is that the existence of a minority language urban centre can be a considerable boost to minority language maintenance efforts. It does not follow, however, that the success of revitalisation policies is *conditional* on the existence of some features. The link is a more complex one. Some of the seven success conditions have a built-in geographical dimension. In particular, meeting conditions 2, 4 and 6 is likely to have different implications depending on patterns of geographical distribution.

Per-capita redistribution is likely to decrease with concentration, if there are some economies of scale in the production of minority language policies; obviously, practical implementation will also need to be approached differently in order to meet the technical effectiveness condition. The problem of “matching” between the provision of minority-language services and the relative concentration of minority-language speakers has been investigated elsewhere, in connection with issues of linguistic human rights (Grin, 1994c).

“Matching” means that some minority language services would be available in areas where the number of speakers reaches a certain absolute number or a percentage in the local resident population, but not elsewhere. Although we are not aware of any full-fledged examination of the links between “matching” (as defined here) and the *effectiveness* (in terms of minority language use) or the *costs* of language policy, we can safely assume that some relations do exist. In terms of effectiveness, however, these links are not clear. For example, it has long been debated whether promotional measures for



Welsh should primarily target the heart of Welsh Wales (which would be a typical “matching” strategy or not (see e.g. Ambrose and Williams, 1981); the mixed success of the Gaeltacht as a policy instrument, discussed in Section 5.1, shows that matching does not guarantee brilliant results, but a strong case can be made that spreading resources more thinly over larger parts of Ireland would have been worse.

On the cost side, matching very probably generates some savings. However, the magnitude of such savings can vary considerably. For example, the person-hour cost of bilingual road signs can drop significantly, with little loss in overall impact, if they are set up only in regions where the number of minority language speakers is relatively high. In the case of broadcasting, by contrast, savings resulting from geographically restricting availability are likely to be modest in relative terms, because if a full range of programmes is produced and aired anyway, the extra cost of making these programmes accessible to viewers across an entire country is one of transmission infrastructure, whose relative share in the unit cost of a person-hour would be secondary and would decline over time. Meeting condition 6 (individual language maintenance) is likely to be costlier when minority language speaking groups are further apart, because policy interventions will be more indispensable than if geography brings them in frequent contact: distance reduces the degree to which speakers can provide each other with opportunities to use the language. Hence, matching can increase the *cost*-effectiveness of measures taken to meet condition 6.

From a theoretical standpoint, it is always possible to add detail and specifications to a model in order to explore the corresponding implications. However, existing theoretical research (e.g. Grin, 1992) suggests that the introduction of demolinguistic variables generally tend to matter relatively less than attitudinal parameters.

From an empirical standpoint, data are insufficiently differentiated to allow for clear conclusions on the issue. Necessary information should, among others, describe similar measures taken in at least two communities that are very different in size, such as the Basque- and Irish-speaking communities. Within one language group, the information needed should include indicators of rates of success by region of residence, in order to compare high-concentration with low-concentration areas. Circumstantial evidence from Wales appears to be rather mixed. It has been claimed that Welsh language policy should focus on “Welsh Wales”, because attrition rates were highest there; yet although the educational opportunities, in terms of exposure to Welsh, are fairly similar throughout the principality, the best results appear to be obtained in regions that are quite different from each other as regards their concentration of speakers. This suggests that there is little correlation between demolinguistic concentration and the success of a particular measure. The cost structure of delivering a service can be quite different, but success is likely to be, first and foremost, related to attitudes. Generally, we would also expect the development of new technologies to lessen the role of size and concentration.

This brief foray into the issue of (geographical) matching, however, indicates that it is primarily relevant in terms of the political rights of minorities and the acceptability (the word “tolerability” is sometimes used in the literature) of such rights to the majority. By contrast, its effect on the effectiveness of policies is unclear, and its effect on costs brings

us back to the preceding point: in final analysis, deciding that a policy is worth adopting or not is fundamentally a political issue.

## 7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main contribution of the monograph is to demonstrate that it is possible to assess the output and costs of various language policies in such a way as to allow an explicit evaluation and ranking in terms of their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. To our knowledge, this study is the first of its kind, because it stresses the role of common units of measurement in order to make it possible to compare policies.

We have therefore attempted to develop an approach different from that adopted in many existing discussions of the implementation of language policies. Such discussions often focus on the targets chosen (sometimes elaborating on targets put forward in earlier policy documents), and on the specific measures adopted to meet these targets; sometimes they offer a descriptive presentation of the effects of such measures. For example, a language planning office may set, as a target, the increase in the level of minority language skills of all teachers and school administrators in a particular region, whether they do or do not work in an establishment which uses the minority language as a medium of instruction. The authorities can then adopt corresponding measures, such as the legal requirement that all schoolteachers meet certain proficiency levels in the minority language. If some survey, five years on, confirms that the average competence level of schoolteachers in the minority language has risen, this will be a satisfactory result, but a moderately surprising one; at most, it would suggest that the “technical effectiveness condition” (condition No. 4, Section 6.2) has been met. Such an observation would, however, be of limited help in assessing whether this particular measure is effective or cost-effective with respect to a broader end-goal, such as the revitalisation of the minority language.

A closer look at the effectiveness of language policies demands a systematic approach. The one we have adopted (which does not imply that it is the only or the best one) required us to go through the following steps.

We first developed an analytical framework connecting language policies with ultimate language outcomes, while relating both to a set of sociolinguistic indicators and to a formalised model of bilinguals’ language behaviour. This model provides a logical rationale for viewing patterns of language use as being influenced by language policy measures. We then move on to the analysis of specific policies, beginning with a description of the relevant demolinguistic, geolinguistic and historical background, showing how each policy “fits” into the analytical framework, and identifying the key actors of the policies—institutional or not. We then use figures on the *expenditure* incurred to implement the policy, and derive an indicator of its *cost*—the crucial difference between these two concepts being that “expenditure” is essentially an

accounting concept, whereas “cost” is a notion that makes sense only in relation to whatever it is that money is being spent on. This requires a precise definition of the output, and hence the selection of an output measure which allows for systematic comparison between the policies. The unit of measurement adopted in this study is that of the increase in aggregate person-hours of minority language use that can be associated with the policy. Expenditure can then be divided by the change in language use to obtain the *per-hour cost of minority language use under a given policy*. These calculations are then integrated in an overall assessment of the policy.

The procedure outlined above also requires us to use several standard economic tools; in particular, it is necessary to annualise the flow of services from capital outputs such as road signs, and to maintain a clear distinction between, on the one hand, the total costs of providing a service in the minority language and, on the other hand, the marginal (or incremental) cost of offering this service in the minority language instead of (or in addition to) offering it in the majority language alone. Detailed reporting of the methodology used in each of the case studies makes it possible for the reader to apply it to other cases. In this sense, this monograph is also indented as a set of guidelines for similar evaluations of the cost-effectiveness of policies in favour of minority languages elsewhere.

The in-depth analysis of the cost-effectiveness dimension of a set of language policies, along with the establishment of a methodology to this end, is the first of the goals pursued in this study. However, another goal is being pursued, namely the development of a systematic approach to the selection of language policies among various options.

We are not suggesting that policies are equivalent and that one can be picked simply on the basis of its cost-effectiveness; however, we submit that such cost-effectiveness is a legitimate choice criterion and as such, one that should be included as an informational element in the public debate over language policy, as well as in the policy selection process taking place at the level of language planning bodies.

The comparison of policy options goes as follows: having calculated per hour costs, we use them as one of two terms in the construction of a *best practice index* (Table 23, Section 6.1). The other term is provided by a set of four impact indicators of the policy, namely: (i) the competence of speakers of a minority language; (ii) the number of speakers; (iii) their attitudes—particularly towards the minority language; (iv) their degree of language use. These four indicators are not constructed formally, and they do not represent *absolute* impacts, but an estimated *ranking* of impacts on a ten-point scale; they are subsequently combined in an overall impact indicator given by their rounded arithmetic average. Finally, the “best practice index” is the simple average, for each policy, of the latter indicator and of its per-hour cost.

Of course, such procedures, in which considerable conceptual difficulties as well as the lack of appropriate data often require the adoption of more or less rough estimates of the actual values of the relevant variables, cannot yield a simple decision rule for the

evaluation, let alone for the adoption of particular policies. Policy making and policy selection remain essentially *political* processes that have to rest on democratic debate; language policies are no exception; furthermore, power and ideologies have to be integrated in the analysis (Grin, 1999c). Recognition of the importance of embedding our technical analysis into a broader socio-political context leads us to consider the set of policies studied here from a different angle, namely, that of the conditions that have enabled a policy to be more (or less) successful.

We identify seven success conditions (respectively labelled “avant-garde”, “redistribution”, “normalcy”, “technical effectiveness”, “implicit price”, “individual maintenance” and “strict preference”) which must be met to ensure success; partly met conditions mean partial success. Interestingly, particular patterns of geographical distribution of speakers appear to have secondary importance, implying that minority language revitalisation is not crucially dependent on, say, concentration of speakers, and that though desirable, this asset can, if absent, be compensated by others.

It is our hope that this investigation into the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of minority language policies can make a useful contribution to the public debate on minority language revitalisation in various countries and for a wide range of languages. In addition, we also hope that it shows how economic analysis, rather than being invoked to discredit minority language policies, can be used to help select them efficiently.

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